

AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

JUNE 7, 1941

WHO'S WHO

WILLIAM G. RYAN was an American volunteer in the International Brigade that fought for the Loyalists in the late Spanish Civil War. He knew the truth, and later discovered how little of the truth the news experts revealed. His commentary on the amount of experting now being used to muddle facts is rather illuminating. However, with diligence, one is able to piece together the essential truths. . . . FRANCES DERMOT is a student attending a college supported by the taxpayers of New York City. Her testimony has been verified by that of other students. "I have been impelled to write this, my first article," she states, "by a desire to counteract in some small way those doctrines which to me seem destructive of the ideals which my parents and grandparents of American birth had taught me to hold dear." She adds: "I have decided that to argue against the Communists verbally is useless. I've had many disagreeable frictions with them." . . . VINCENT W. HARTNETT is another young writer who appears for the first time. He finished a two-year special course in Apologetics at Notre Dame University in 1939. Since then, he has been engaged in free-lance writing. . . . MARY FABYAN WINDEATT is becoming increasingly well known through her human-interest articles on Catholic activities. . . . THOMAS A. FOX, C.S.P. sends his amusing yet profound comments from San Francisco, where he is engaged in parochial duties. . . . EMMET LAVERY, our foremost Catholic playwright, contributed the idea that led to the formation of the Catholic Theatre Conference.

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COMMENT

THIS Review has been consistently dedicated to the policy of maintaining peace, as the best means of safeguarding our nation. It has been totally opposed to the doctrines and the actions of the Governments of Soviet Russia, Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Japan. It has espoused the cause of the democracies and the nations attacked by the Axis and the Communist powers. It has advocated all-out aid to Britain and her allies. It has contended that the United States, at some future date, might be obliged to fight against the aggressive action of totalitarian nations. At the same time, it has asserted that the United States is neither prepared, at this time, to wage battle, nor obliged by present circumstances to attempt battle. It maintains that the views thus far pronounced and the policies thus far advocated are still convincing. But the President of the United States, in his official capacity, has proclaimed that there exists a state of unlimited emergency. To his authority, as stated in our editorial columns, this Review defers. Such an emergency is a prelude to war. The affirmation of the American right to the freedom of the seas is, likewise, a prelude to war under existing conditions. Whether war comes to our nation in all its horrible tragedy, or whether peace may still be maintained and advocated is clouded in the grim future. While pledging our loyalty to the nation and unity of endeavor and spirit to the President, we shall urge that this nation preserve peace as long as possible.

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ACCORDING to reliable estimates, more than 400,000 Catholics have been inducted into the Army and Navy, and are now engaged in active duty. Exact figures as to the religious affiliations of the other men in service have not been revealed. Since the army now totals 1,400,000 men, and the navy has approximately 227,000 under orders, the Catholic percentage seems disproportionately high, amounting to nearly twenty-five per cent. The Catholic percentage in the civilian population of the United States is not more than sixteen per cent. During World War I, and for years afterwards, Catholic panegyrists boasted grandiosely about the excess percentage of Catholic young men who served their country in the Army and Navy, and used the figures as proofs of the extraordinary loyalty of our Catholic people. We may still make the same boast, but we might also be realistic about the matter. What is the reason for the nine per cent disproportion between the Catholic population and the Catholic representation in the armed forces? Is it that there are more Catholic young men of the draft age? Is it that the Catholic young men are superior physically and therefore more apt to be drafted? Is it that they are more patriotic and more eager to volunteer? The questions are

asked in no captious spirit, and are intended to carry no religious implications. They merely point a fact of interest, that nearly one-fourth of the army and navy is Catholic, whereas only one-sixth of the nation professes Catholicism.

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AT the meeting in Washington of the National Nutrition Conference for Defense, attended by more than five hundred dietary experts, plans for improving the food habits of the people were formulated. One authority asserted that one-third of all the nation's families were purchasing food incapable of providing a diet rating better than "poor," and that only one family in four attained a diet rating of "good." Seventy-five per cent of our people, this authority continued, were thus suffering from what is described as "hidden hunger," a state in which the person lacks essential food elements without being aware of the fact until disease creeps up on him. Dietary suggestions for various types of individual were released to the press. The efforts of the conference to acquaint the lay population with the latest scientific discoveries with regard to essential food balance constitute a valuable contribution to defense. Without minimizing these efforts in the least, one cannot, however, help marveling at the phenomenon of intense concern over material diet accompanied by serene unconcern over spiritual diet. Somewhere around seventy-five per cent of our people are suffering from spiritual starvation. They are enduring the pangs of "hidden spiritual hunger." And few leaders are worrying much about it. A correct attitude toward food is important for national defense. A correct attitude toward God is of incomparably greater importance. A newspaper headline described the conference thus: "Food Seen as Key to New Life." Victuals alone will never achieve the full life. Vision must be added to the diet—spiritual vision.

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SENATOR DANAHER struck a hard blow for civil liberties in the Senate the other day and startled some of his colleagues with an amazing interpretation of the search-and-seizure amendment to the Constitution. It seems the priorities bill just adopted by Congress authorizes Federal officers to inspect the premises of any firm, corporation or person to make sure that no stores of prioritized materials are hidden there against the law. Senator Danaher feared that this bill, read technically, might authorize search of private homes and dwellings, and that over-zealous law officers might indulge in an orgy of searches and seizures worse than those under Attorney General Palmer during the hysteria of the last war. Senator Danaher's colleagues, however, pooh-poohed this suggestion and

pointed to the Fourth Amendment. It still holds, they said; and no citizen's home can be entered by Federal officers without a warrant issued on probable cause and backed by oath. It was at this point that the Senator threw a bomb into the Chamber. That is not what the Constitution says, he pointed out. The Amendment protects the citizen's home from *unreasonable* searches, but it does not specifically protect him from searches made *without warrant*. Senator Danaher proposed a clause in the priorities bill forbidding search without warrant, since this would be a guarantee against unreasonable invasions of the citizen's privacy. Without such a clause, the Senator insisted, the priorities law would justify any search of any citizen's home, and moreover, would legalize it as *reasonable*. And thus the citizen would be deprived of the so-called protection of the Fourth Amendment. The Senate, however, refused to accept Mr. Danaher's change. They said (in effect): "We don't agree with your interpretation of the Fourth Amendment. But even if Federal officials do have power to search without warrant, they will not abuse it—even in times of war hysteria."

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DESPITE the general callousness to killing which comes with the horrors of war, the civilized concept of the sacredness of life still prevails. Landlords of tenements find themselves in jail when lives are lost through their criminal negligence in providing adequate fire protection for their tenants. Criminals who wantonly take life, feel the full force of avenging justice. Drunken and careless drivers are recognized as brutal menaces because they jeopardize life. Life is sacred and those into whose hands lives are entrusted feel the awful burden of their responsibility. But what is alarming and false in the modern view of life, is that its sacredness is entirely a human and humane consideration. The rights of the Author of life are completely ignored. Look for any mention of God in current discussions of euthanasia and birth control. You will look in vain. Doctors and parents are, apparently, the final arbiters of the awful realities of Life and Death. The tremendous and mysterious creation of life can be tampered with, prevented or terminated by human wills with complete disregard of the Divine Will. Such sacrilegious temerity is one of the most horrible and frightening features of neo-paganism. Of all the sins and follies of human beings, this is the most dangerous and most likely to invite the wrath of God, because it reaches to the very throne of the Creator and thwarts His dominion over creatures.

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THE mail from the hinterland to Washington still appeared to be overwhelmingly against a "shooting war." To the White House from Boston went a mile-long anti-convoys resolution signed by 200,000 mothers. The petition carried more than 5,000 feet of names. Letters from all over the nation to the office of Senator Pepper were reported by the press to be six to five against the use of convoys. Most

of Senator Connally's correspondents appealed to him to "keep us out of war." Senator Tobey's office reported that mail for the last month has amounted to around 2,000 letters a day, with only ten to fifteen letters a day advocating convoys. Congressman Sol Bloom's office reported that ninety-five per cent of the cards received are against convoys, that a majority of the letters are likewise opposed to convoys. Senator Wagner revealed that a little more than half of his mail is opposed to the use of convoys by this country, while Senator Reynolds divulged he receives about 400 letters a day, of which only about ten are pro-war. Senator Barkley's staff declared his correspondence runs about fifty-fifty on the convoy issue. Senator Gillette stated that eighty per cent of his mail is anti-convoys and anti-war, and Congressman Ludlow claimed that 99 9/10 per cent of the letters he receives are against "any step that will lead us to war." Senator Brooks, referring to his mail, said that "better than ninety per cent of it is anti-convoys and anti-war," while Senator Vandenberg remarked that his correspondents are "practically unanimous in their opposition to convoys and war." Senator Wheeler reported: "Practically 100 per cent against convoys." Senator Johnson of California, stated that his mail runs fifty-to-one against convoys and war.

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THE BATTLE over convoys, however, has subsided, and a new conflict is preparing. This will rage over the scream-eagle slogan of the freedom of the seas. The United States has always proclaimed its right to send American ships over all the seas and along all the sea-routes. But Congress, a few years back, when pacifism was popular, voluntarily restricted our right by passage of the Neutrality Act. Then came the Lend-Lease bill which, for effective implementing, requires that American ships be free to traverse dangerous seas freely. The gravity of the affirmation of our right is obviously profound: the first shooting in an undeclared war will take place on free seas.

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IN the June issue of *Liturgical Arts*, quarterly devoted to the arts in the service of the Church's official worship, a plea is made for a much more general and generous recognition of the individual artist or craftsman on the part of those who are in charge of ecclesiastical building projects. Were the commercial element in religious art and craftsmanship reduced to its proper proportions, were some of the obstacles removed which now stand between prospective patron and competent artist, both patron and artist would reap vastly greater satisfaction. Point is made that the number of these competent artists is on the continual increase. Specialists in every branch of liturgical fabric and decoration have multiplied in recent years. Home talent has progressed and is supplemented by distinguished workmen from abroad. The time has come for useless and mutually disadvantageous barriers to be broken down.

WHILE the Church organist is heard, he is usually not seen, and is apt to be the forgotten man as far as social justice is concerned. Now that the stops are being pulled out for the grand chorus as to labor's rights, the organists feel they should do a little pedaling on their own behalf. An editorial in the *Diapason*, official organ of the American Guild of Organists, points out that "musicians who take so prominent a part" in church worship "have no rights or standing." They receive no pensions, have no collective bargaining power, and as employees of churches are outside the provisions of the social-security act. The solution is to be found in "the legislative bodies of the various denominations."

AGREEMENT on "all outstanding questions," including that of the appointment of Spanish Bishops and Archbishops, was announced on May 19, between the Spanish Government and the Vatican. The understanding would not take the form of a concordat, but was a "working agreement." Since the abdication and exile ten years ago of the late King Alfonso XIII, the question of the appointment of Spanish bishops, once held by the Kings of Spain, has been in dispute. No details are yet announced. No official recognition appears to have been given by the Holy See to the newly formed and Italian-ruled Kingdom of Croatia.

NO Saint in the history of the Church, hardly even the great Saint Francis of Assisi himself, produced such an inexhaustible fund of anecdote and example as did Saint John Bosco, the mighty apostle of youth. On June 8, of this year the hundredth anniversary of the beginning of his work and priestly ordination is being solemnly celebrated. The world will never weary of the story of this living miracle of zeal, industry, active holiness and flashing wit and humor. Scarcely less remarkable, however, than the story of the Saint himself, is the history of the rapid growth, in so few years, of the Salesian missionaries, whom he founded, to a mighty organization sending forth its message to the most inaccessible parts of the earth.

NEW restrictions on the Catholic press in Germany were reported from Rome on May 24. According to "high Vatican quarters," as reported by the *New York Times*, an order has been issued to the effect that all Catholic periodicals, bulletins and newspapers must cease publication as of June 1. The same sources also are reported as saying that German publications have received explicit orders not to print photographs or pictures of the Pope. Since certain German Catholic publications have been coming of late quite regularly to the United States, it should not be difficult to check upon the accuracy of this report.

GRANDEST music in a cathedral, according to Bishop Duffy of Buffalo, is the sound of more than 1,500 babies brought there by their proud parents to receive the Bishop's blessing. "I ask the mothers not to make the slightest attempt to quiet the children," said the Bishop, "we are delighted that they

have voice enough to fill the Cathedral, and I bless their voices and bless them." It took him two hours to bless each of them individually.

TWO years ago, Piety Winters, a colored woman, aged eighty, became a Catholic. She rescued from destitution a colored man ninety-six years old, Zacharias Joseph Newbold, brought him to the priest, and had him instructed in the Catholic Faith. Recently this near-centenarian was baptized, made his First Communion, and was confirmed by Bishop Hurley of Saint Augustine. He is now a zealous member of Our Lady Star of the Sea parish in Key West. Confirmed at the same time was another eighty-year old and blind colored woman, Nieves Rodriguez, "Princess Snow White," whose full name is Maria, Nuestra Señora de la Nieves Rodriguez. Faith and love, not years, are the pledge of youth in Christ's Kingdom.

RECENT Jubilee celebrations of the Encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno* brought forth many interesting observations. In Kansas City, at Rockhurst College, Thomas J. Joyce, vice-president of the Radio Corporation of America, outlined the labor policies of his company and stressed the fact that labor, management and capital must work together for the common good. "No one group," he said, "can be successful without the others. And the three of them . . . cannot be a success working together unless they satisfy the one only employer—the customer." Class cooperation, said Frank P. Fenton, American Federation of Labor, "is the basis for the good life." Speaking in New York, Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen said that the Catholic Church stressed liberty and freedom, not security, as essential for society and labor erred if it stressed the "wrong thing," in the struggle for its legitimate demands. In San Francisco Archbishop Mitty announced the appointment of a committee of seventeen northern California leaders to devise a plan for carrying out the teachings of the Encyclicals. In Detroit, Archbishop Mooney praised the labor-industry councils, advocated by Philip Murray, president of the C.I.O., as in harmony with the ideas of Pope Pius XI.

AFTER long years of backwardness, religious instruction in Mexico stands now at the forefront of progressive, effective methods, according to the Most Rev. Miguel Miranda, Bishop of Tulancingo, now visiting the United States. The anti-Christian forces, says the Bishop, are becoming "tired of persecuting," and more and more against them is lined up the tremendous weight of Mexico's old Catholic traditions. The tenth anniversary of the Mexican catechetical movement, initiated by Bishop Miranda, was recently celebrated at Guadalupe. Catechists no longer teach by mere rote, but are trained pedagogically and spiritually to interpret to the children a finely graded set of religious textbooks, and at Tulancingo pupils are individually examined by the Bishop himself. Nothing could be more heartening than this news of a religious renaissance in this sorely tried and persecuted country.

ADD A DASH OF SKEPTICISM TO THE REPORTS OF THE EXPERTS

WILLIAM G. RYAN

THE title "expert" has a peculiar fascination for most Americans. In this country, whoever assumes the exalted status of expert, no matter how casually, is assured of a generous measure of public adulation. As long as an expert can continue to expert, analyze and prophesy, he or she will not want for enthusiastic admirers within the territorial boundaries of the United States. Nor is it at all difficult for an expert to retain the favor of the usually fickle masses over an extended period. Unlike pugilism, poetry writing, or politics, experting does not seem to depend on consistently good or sensational performance. This paradoxical circumstance has led some observers to believe that the great secret of successful experting is failure—an opinion in support of which strong arguments can be advanced.

Once I shared fully the high regard of the general public for experts, particularly military experts, who at present are considered the *crème de la crème* of the profession. I viewed with something slightly beyond awe these gentry and their first cousins the columnists, radio commentators, and correspondents, who daily, and in the most offhand fashion, decide the outcome of battles not yet fought and perpetrate startling diplomatic *coups* without turning a hair. In brief, I thought that experts were the noblest and most astute of men, and military experts, I had no doubt, were the natural aristocrats of the expertocracy.

But that was before I had ever been a soldier. My faith in experts received rude and almost fatal blows while I was helping the once notorious International Brigades carry out "brilliant" military operations in the rugged Aragon mountains of Spain; it died miserably when on my return to America I yielded to an unhappy impulse to find out what the experts of the very reputable daily newspapers had written about the very same battles in which I had fought.

This excursion into the files was an exceedingly interesting journey. Through it I learned things that might have been incredible had they not been recorded in the columns of staid and reputable periodicals. For example, I found that we actually had been winning the war all the while I had believed we were taking a thorough and steady drubbing. I learned that our infrequent reverses were due solely to the fact that we had only flintlock muskets with which to fight off enemy tanks and airplanes. Most startling of all, I discovered that

Communists had nothing to do with our government or our army.

The delicacy with which experts handled phases of the Spanish war that appeared to have a Moscow tinge did great credit to their tact. One world-famous correspondent, for instance, in his dispatches to the *New York Times* habitually styled "Commissioners" those delightful gentlemen whom we called Commissars, or more familiarly "comic stars." Incidentally, he managed very well to convey the impression that "Commissioners" were, by and large, happy combinations in the right proportions of Robin Hood, George Washington, Sieur Galahad and Abraham Lincoln. If any Commissar had a touch of the irascible in his nature, or a slight impulsiveness of character which might (and occasionally did) lead him to draw a long barreled revolver with the object of hastily liquidating a "politically undeveloped" comrade of lower rank, it was generously overlooked by this correspondent. In perusing his reports, the readers of the *New York Times* must have gained the impression that "Commissioners" in Spain were the salt of the earth and they certainly found no hint that the salt occasionally lost its savor.

Perhaps because the ground had been fallow for some time previously, the yield during the Spanish civil war was unusually luxuriant. In going over the records I have become convinced that never, before or since, have experts reached such heights as they did during that sanguinary conflict. It was in this war that they described our precipitate flight over the 300 kilometers of Iberian Peninsula from the Aragon front to the Mediterranean as "rectifying our lines." It was in this struggle that the experts cheered their readers with the titillating announcement that we were "yielding the ground inch by inch and inflicting terrific losses on the enemy" during that memorable period when we were scampering over the landscape twenty miles ahead of the foe and going fast in all directions that led away from the front.

There were enough "strategic retreats" on our side to warrant attention. We kept on retreating strategically and regularly from the outset up to the last minute and the experts kept on steadily converting "successful withdrawals" into brilliant maneuvers well designed to bring General Franco to his knees. Time was on our side, they said. Given time and territory enough we were certain to exhaust the enemy eventually. Unfortunately, or

fortunately, the sea and the French border prevented our carrying this tactic to its conclusion.

Revolts and desertions were also dear to the hearts of commentators on the Spanish war. By actual count in the columns of the American press, there were 186 major revolts in General Franco's territory and the minor uprisings defy enumeration. As to desertions, they ran well into the millions. It was a dull day on the Northern front when 10,000 fully equipped Franco troops did not come over to our side on the Southern front. When we were on the Southern front, mass desertions of the enemy occurred frequently on the Northern front. Throughout the war I lived in constant hope of getting on a front where large numbers of enemy deserters were coming over fully equipped, and eventually I was gratified to witness the movement of a single enemy soldier into our lines. But sadly enough he did not bring with him so much as a single grenade or rifle bullet.

Colorful as the reports of military operations were they pale into drabness when compared to the political analyses. One and all, the skilled observers of the Spanish war outdid themselves in this field. They poured forth a perfect deluge of downright eloquence about the defense of Spanish democracy, a democracy which certainly did have many extraordinary, not to say arresting, angles. These democracy aspects of "Loyalist" Spain undoubtedly inspired some of the most remarkable analyses ever accorded to any subject. But it is a matter of considerable wonder and no small regret that all of it inadvertently omitted descriptions of the Soviet sanatoria for political dissidents and the Stalinist firing squads which to non-expert observers seemed such integral parts of the Spanish scene.

Perhaps the worst consequence from a personal standpoint of my review of expert opinion of the war in which I fought, is the fact that it has done much to crystallize what may have been nothing more than a mild touch of congenital skepticism into confirmed doubt. I have become a man without faith insofar as experts are concerned. It is now difficult for me to believe whole-heartedly, no matter how attractively news and theory are presented. I even imagine that I can detect familiar patterns in the reportage and experting of the present war. Whenever I see the phrases: "successful withdrawal," "holding to the last man," "strategic retreat," and "inflicting heavy losses on the enemy," pessimistic connotations immediately follow. While "yielding inch by inch" and "rectifying our lines" drops me into yawning depths of cynicism.

Correspondents, commentators and military analysts were certainly hopeful about pre-Blitz conditions in the Balkans. They were almost unanimous in the belief that Southeastern Europe would provide the turning point of the war, and they proclaimed confidently that Herr Hitler was in for a thorough drubbing in that sector. Some even hinted broadly that a push north to Berlin was in the immediate offing. One correspondent whose syndicated stuff is read by millions, and whose reputation is second to none, summed up the just-before-the-battle situation in the following manner:

Athens, Greece. A great British army, equipped with the best weapons the combined industries of the British empire and the United States could provide, is spread over a large part of the Greek peninsula ready for a major test with the Germans.

This expeditionary force, landed here with negligible losses compared with the extent of the operation, is composed of the pick of the army of the Nile—the powerful military machine which General Sir Archibald P. Wavell assembled in Egypt in the last year and sent on a victory sweep against the Italians through eastern Libya.

Included are famous English regiments, hardy Australian troops who rolled back the Italians in Libya, fresh New Zealand forces and many special units drawn from all parts of the British empire.

Supplementing this army, which has come to Greece prepared to profit by lessons the British learned at Dunkerque and in Norway, is a battle fleet claiming mastery of the Mediterranean.

It could easily be assumed by those unfamiliar with the mechanics of the trade that experting of this type is misleading and well calculated to lower the prestige of an expert to something below absolute zero when the facts come out. But nothing of the sort ever happens. They are still issuing authoritative statements in the most confident manner and the public is still accepting their words.

Of course, dispensing unpleasant truths is a thankless task as many a man has learned. I found that out when I made the tactical error of attempting to outline some of the alarming facts I had observed in France and pre-Munich England.

In the first of these countries, I spent some time during the incumbency of Premier Leon Blum. What I saw there induced me to predict the fall of France long before the event. It seemed to me that the pictures of Comrade Stalin and the hammer and sickle emblems which adorned the working class cafes of Paris, the 600,000 Communist votes in that city, the 126 municipalities under Communist control, and the general *Internationale* atmosphere which pervaded the country from one end to the other were strong evidences of internal weakness. I felt that France was doomed and I said so, to the considerable enhancement of my unpopularity among the wishful thinkers who held a firm belief in a second miracle of the Marne.

I realize that it is now a *faux pas* verging on the criminal to say anything that may be construed as derogatory of England. But I did put in a good deal of time there in the months preceding Munich, and I saw, or thought I saw, a great many evidences of sinister forces arising primarily out of an obvious inability to solve internal problems. I think there were factors within the country itself potentially as threatening as any outside force, and I think the shadow of some of those forces can be discerned right here in the United States.

It seems to me that we are and have been getting some pretty large doses of hokum mixed with the news, and I believe the public is entitled to a little dash of realism now and then. In the meantime, those who desire to keep informed might try taking the news with reverse English. In that manner it is not very cheering right now. A number of experts have just predicted a British victory, a circumstance to cause grave alarm.

MY PROFESSORS DESTROY MY FAITH IN GOD AND COUNTRY

FRANCES DERMOT

I AM a student of one of New York City's free colleges, and frankly speaking, I am confused by those who exhort us to preserve democracy, but instruct us in doctrines which in my opinion destroy it.

That "democracy" like "charity" covers a multitude of sins is evident from the address of a recent high school valedictorian. He said:

What we need is not less but more democracy. We are the pioneers of a new world order based on the principle: To each according to his needs; from each according to his ability. There can be no compromise with existing abuses. Let the dead past bury its dead. We have no past. We have a future.

To my mind, this speech does not advocate the preservation of democracy, but rather the innovation of Communism. It reeks of Karl Marx. Yet it was permitted, and moreover, it is consistent with the definition given me by my college professor. "Democracy," he explained, "is a conflict between classes which will result in the victory of the lower classes, provided it is genuine."

This growing identification of democracy with Communism is most confusing, for to me, the fundamental philosophy of the one is entirely incompatible with that of the other.

Exactly what, then, is this democracy in whose name so many sacrifices are to be made? Is it, as the valedictorian implied, and as a City College graduate explained, a dynamic, changing concept? If so, I should like to be sure that what we fight to defend will not change to something new and undesirable before the fight is over. Is democracy, as the encyclopedia informs us, in its political sense, a government of the people (of all of the people), or does it mean more and more power in the hands of the proletariat? Is it, in its economical sense, a matter of equal *opportunity*; or is it a plan for the *redistribution* of wealth? Has it the spiritual connotation of tolerance and the brotherhood of man—or is it devoid of spiritual values—a mere materialistic doctrine of hatred, envy and class warfare? Is it the democracy of an America with her freedom of speech, press, religion; or is it an international democracy of horizontal economic stratification emanating from Russia, and characterized by freedom for oppression, censorship and irreligion? Upon the answer to these questions much depends, for to subscribe to the democracy of my professors is, in my opinion, to sign away my cherished liberties, and my Americanism.

What then, do I consider American democracy?

To me it is not merely a composite of the civil liberties enumerated in the Bill of Rights. To think so would be to see the trees but not the forest. It is more than this. It is a philosophy of life based upon:

1. Belief in God and man's possession of a spiritual and immortal soul; and, in consequence

2. Belief in the equal dignity and worth of each individual person.

3. The right of every individual citizen, without distinction, to acquire and own such property as is conducive to the maintenance and well-being of his family, as the basic unit of society; and the right of every citizen, without distinction, to the means of livelihood necessary for such acquisition and ownership.

4. Belief in a traditional form of representative government, which respects the rights of every individual and is in accordance with the character and history of the American people.

To these beliefs the historic documents and cherished writings of our early patriots bear abundant testimony. Yet these values and that Constitution which is the chief instrument of their expression, perpetuation and guardianship, are constantly undermined by the new un-American doctrines taught us in the classrooms supported by the money of the taxpayers of an American city.

That students accept the new iconoclastic views I can understand. It has always been considered fashionable for college students to rebel against the established; possibly because we flatter ourselves that we are more intelligent than our predecessors and know a better way. Although we concede that old wine, old friends and old cultures are good, we draw the line at that. In any other connection, the use of the word "old" starts us sniffing the air, and detecting a rather mummified odor in our "progressive" nostrils.

The joke may be on us, for Communism, dating from Karl Marx is mid-Victorian. Some of us recognize this, but still prefer it because we are misled idealists who find in the challenge of inaugurating a new world order more emotional appeal than in the plea to preserve the American way. We take the easy road of tearing down, rather than the hard one of building up. We use the "glib tongue, nimble wit and supply of glittering generalities" which passes for brilliancy. We, too, understand the slogan-making which substitutes for thinking. We, too, become conventionally unconventional, con-

forming non-conformists, believing because it is hammered at us day after day:

1. That there is no personal God.
2. That there are no absolute standards.
3. That abstractions like truth, liberty, justice are mere words.

4. That the Constitution is undemocratic, and that its founders were a group of selfish cut-throat capitalists.

It would be a most difficult and unpopular task for anyone to refute these views which are held by so many "intellectuals." They leave me, however, utterly bewildered when I try to reconcile them with Americanism as I have always understood it.

The materialists and scientists, for example, may deny God, but certainly they cannot deny that belief in Him is one of the fundamental American principles.

If, in spite of this tradition, I repudiate belief in God, a major premise of Americanism, I do not see how I can hold on to that conclusion based upon it, namely that man has rights. Consequently I endanger the Bill of Rights. Man does not, as I see it, have rights because a state grants them, for they existed before States were formed. In the words of the Declaration of Independence, it was "to secure these rights, governments were instituted among men." It is apparent from this that the Founding Fathers' fundamental philosophy was that men existed for a purpose of far greater significance than the success of any political, economic or social plan; that man owed his existence to a Superior Being; that, this being so, man's first allegiance must be to the natural laws established by that Power, among which is the law of self improvement through the medium of freedom of person, expression and worship.

It is important to observe, moreover, that by shaking the foundation of the Bill of Rights, I pave the way not only for the liquidation of my personal liberties, but also of my person itself. If I deny God, I relegate the Ten Commandments to man-imposed taboos relative to time, place and circumstance—and not by any means "absolute." If then, these absolute universal norms are discarded, right becomes a matter of individual opinion, and people rationalize that what is advantageous to them is ethically correct. Might makes right, and it takes only power to rationalize me out of existence. Hitler rationalized that the conquest of Poland was a noble protection of the rights of a small minority. Stalin rationalized that the murder of millions of Kulaks was beneficial to the proletariat.

Even, however, were such results not anticipated in America, nevertheless I cannot see how the doctrine of relative values is in any sense "progressive." Certainly it does not help America to progress; for how can our "nation indivisible" cooperate in progressing toward a goal if each has a different opinion of what and where that goal is. I agree with Mr. Chesterton that "What is wrong with the world is that we don't know what is right," and that we must have objective standards.

Despite this necessity, no one refutes the doctrines of empiricism and materialism, so much em-

phasized in our classrooms. These doctrines inform us that nothing exists except that capable of demonstration through the sense or capable of scientific proof. God cannot be seen, felt, weighed; neither can the abstractions, liberty and justice and democracy.

Indeed these are the very things against which we are warned in another course called semantics. Of course, it does seem contradictory to warn us in semantics, against the forming of concepts, which, according to materialism, as I understand it, cannot exist. There is a kind of Don Quixote flavor to all this, and we find ourselves fighting imaginary giants. If there is no such abstraction as freedom for example, why the parades and mass meetings for academic freedom? But we are used to contradictions. The churchmen prove by reason that there is a God; the materialists deny Reason and yet accept a conclusion of reason that God cannot exist because He cannot be experienced through the senses. What am I to believe?

When, moreover, I deny God and abstractions, my patriotism is shot to pieces for I find that when I pledge allegiance to "one nation indivisible with liberty and justice for all," I am using meaningless words. My oath in court is also without value, and as Washington said, "Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice?"

Nevertheless, great pressure is brought to bear on the destruction of spiritual value in every course. We are told, for example, that Einstein's theory of relativity proves that morals are relative. Some of us do not get the connection between relativity in the physical and in the moral world. We cannot criticize, and certainly would not presume to apply the theory outside its proper sphere, for in the first place we do not thoroughly understand it. We suspect that our professors do not either; so we let it go at that, concluding that it is all somehow done with mirrors.

However, once we are told that no "progressive" believes any longer in absolute values, we hesitate to label ourselves unprogressive, and we are thus precluded from criticism of anything for lack of ethical standards. Even the novel, the greatest medium for the expression of moral values, is criticized for fulfilling its function. I have heard a high school teacher recommend the discontinuance of Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* because it is too idealistic. Some thought it good to have ideals, believing with Browning that "a man's reach should exceed his grasp or what's a Heaven for?" My professor says, however, that the one essential of a good book is "social significance." Practically this means that a book need not be an artistic production as long as it is a kind of historical monument to a new ideology. It may be excused for excessive length, for lack of organization and for other literary deficiencies, provided that there is a hero who suffers and sins because of existing social conditions. Perhaps we do not agree that a person need be a spineless victim of society, so that the social significance leaves us unconvinced. The lengthy

description of the victim's sins, however, is something else again.

These views are further borne out in our course in civilization where we are told that morals are mere conventions, anyway, and that if we all co-operate to do the "wrong" thing, the wrong thing becomes right by mutual agreement. As our professor said, for example, "Companionate marriage should be legalized because it is being done." So then, should murder.

I do not know what is left for us to hold sacred, nor to what we may hitch our loyalties. Even our Constitution is disparaged as an economic rather than democratic document—as if there were a necessary conflict between the two adjectives. It was framed to protect private property and to oppress the poor by originally omitting the Bill of Rights. These accusations seem such distortions. As I understood it, the Bill of Rights was originally considered unnecessary, and its addition a case of making assurance doubly sure. The foremost consideration was the limitation of governmental control through a system of checks and balances, and a three-fold division of power. It was important to assure that the authority created for the protection of human rights might not become so powerful as to destroy those rights.

We are told to "Let the dead past bury its dead." Yet those who rallied to Wilson's battle cry of saving the world for democracy might feel betrayed could they know that we "keep faith" with those who lie in Flanders Fields by burying their memory. Do we not preserve our democracy rather by remembering and protecting?

We protect our Americanism by realizing that although millions are being spent in defense, tribute is being paid to foreign ideologies. While the spotlight is being directed across the Atlantic against the aggression of National Socialism, socialism of a different brand is being indoctrinated from within these borders. For example, there is a private school of college grade in New York City which pays tribute in its murals to the Russian Revolution, to Lenin and to the hammer and sickle. Who knows but that somewhere in America there exists a school which pays tribute to Hitler and the swastika; for among rogues why show partiality? As a student who constantly hears that we must preserve democracy, I am puzzled that these things should be.

I am personally convinced that the only phase of democracy some folks wish to preserve is that of free speech, by which they will mislead with noble-sounding slogans the young, the laborer, the Negro and those who can be convinced that they are oppressed, until with such support, they succeed in inaugurating a totalitarian government which will destroy all other phases of democracy—for the benefit of the charter members of the new order.

Let us students defend our American heritage, distrusting those, who while rendering lip service to the preservation of the American way, are rendering heart service to the undermining of its foundations.

ACCENT ON CATHOLIC IN CATHOLIC ACTION

VINCENT W. HARTNETT

SOME of the puzzling problems with respect to Catholic Action groups and the Catholic lay leader are raised by John E. Reardon's article, *Getting Better Lay Leaders for Vertical Lay Societies* (AMERICA, March 8). Father Reardon has grasped one of the basic dangers of such groups as they now exist, and he has put forward the germs of a solution. He has deplored the fact that Catholic groups not infrequently fall under the domination of articulate laymen who are in the work chiefly for what they can get out of it. And he has advanced the concept of Corporatism, so universally valuable, as at least a basic step toward a detached leadership and an articulate rank and file.

As one ponders the questions Father Reardon raises, and then sets against them the answer he gives, one wonders if he has not, after all, failed to grasp the nettle of a much more basic problem. How is there to be a *Catholic* lay leadership of any kind?

Most studies of Catholic Action, it seems to the present writer, become so engrossed with the mechanics of Catholic Action, or with its palpable goals, that they are unconscious of a term which necessarily must give light and substance to all discussion. It is the term, *Catholic*. You may have every kind of action for the common good, you may organize your groups with the utmost care, you may have intelligent and energetic leaders. But if your groups are not profoundly *Catholic*, you have not Catholic Action.

Catholicism has many elements. It is doctrinal. It has a social principle of cohesion. It has a nutritive system. One could go on naming many elements which are comprised in the notion, "Catholic." All of these elements, at one time or another, need to be reasserted, in the face of social philosophies and movements which would tend to destroy or obscure them. At the present day, when the powers of hell are attacking the Mystical Body of Christ with almost unparalleled violence and subtlety, one element of Catholicism must be underlined with renewed determination. That is the *ascetical* element of the Church.

Probably at no time since the collapse of the Roman Empire has naturalism so permeated Western civilization as it has in our days. One can readily trace the origins of this naturalism, which sees man merely as a superior beast, to the English deists, the Encyclopedists in France, the *Illuminati* in Germany and probably back to the pagan humanists of fifteenth century Italy. What especially interests us at the moment is the general effect which pagan humanism, or naturalism, has had on human society. That effect has been to deaden our

sensibilities to the supernatural world as a whole.

We are living today in a society which is perhaps less influenced by supernatural concepts than it has ever been since the birth of Christ. The dominant preoccupation of our age has been the care of the body. Human sciences have multiplied like protozoa, and the patent offices have been inundated with schemes which aimed to bring bodily comfort, convenience and mechanical efficiency to every phase of our existence.

What is important for us to grasp is this, that the spirit of naturalism has seeped into the Catholic mind and heart to an extent which we never realize. When the Son of God took upon Himself human nature, He—as it were—tilted the world's axis to the perpendicular. Human nature was elevated to a new dignity, Divine sonship. Man's eyes were raised to a new and loftier goal than reason had known, and new means were given to man to attain that goal. Christ brought the life of grace. But it has been the terrifying work of the past six centuries or more to bend gradually the world's axis away from the perpendicular that pointed to the whole supernatural order. The current of modern history is going away from Jesus Christ.

There, it seems to this writer, is the most basic problem of Catholic Action and of lay leadership. We may have a great deal of action; but is very much of it *Catholic* Action? If it is preoccupied with questions of organization, of goals to be achieved, of concrete means to be taken to achieve them and if little more is said or done, then it is not Catholic Action.

Catholic Action, the late Holy Father found it necessary to inform us, begins with the individual. There is no reform of society possible until we individually begin honestly to reform ourselves. And this reform embraces much more than living by the active virtues, such as fortitude, zeal, positive charity toward one's neighbor. The beginning of reform is to embrace an honest and unflinching asceticism, realizing that there can be no incorporation of the individual into the life of the mystical Body of Christ unless prayer and renunciation be added to the reception of the Sacraments.

This is the most frequent point of breakdown in Catholic Action. Our whole being has become so filled with the invisible toxin of naturalism that we tend to forget, or to minimize, the essential role which asceticism plays in the Christian life. We may not realize it, but we are actually Pelagians or Semi-Pelagians in our daily lives. We claim to be Catholics, and perhaps we do all we can in our fumbling human way to be good Catholics. But because we are blinded with naturalism, we try to be good Catholics often by merely human means, such as organizing societies, making speeches, walking in parades. Are all these good? Yes, surely, they are very good—so far as they go—but these are not enough. To become a good Catholic, one must enter vigorously into the life of grace. And that requires prayer, mortification and penance, the frequentation of the Sacraments, all of which must be informed by charity.

The application of all this to Catholic Action is

obvious. Catholic Action is the participation of the laity in the Church's apostolate, under the direction of the Hierarchy. It implies developing in one's self the supernatural life, and then by organized effort bringing that life to others. But all this is vastly more than a natural work. Grace is needed to begin it, to carry it along, to perfect it.

A cardinal point in all discussions of Catholic Action, therefore, must be: "How far is this particular work of Catholic Action a work of grace?"

If it is to be a work of grace (i.e., truly a supernatural work which will be supernaturally fruitful, and, therefore, apostolic), it must have a supernatural aim, it must be motivated by supernatural considerations, it must be carried on by laymen who are leading a truly supernatural life, and it must be done in a supernatural spirit.

It has too long been our folly to assume that we could omit one or more of these conditions, and yet have Catholic Action. This is not meant to categorize Catholic Action in general as lacking in the proper supernatural character. What the writer has in mind is that there is a far greater degree of naturalism in Catholic Action groups than most lay people (and many of the clergy) realize.

We often act on the assumption that we can turn those talents and energies which are so useful in workaday life into the channels of organized Catholic endeavor, and automatically have Catholic Action. And so we are taken up with mechanical problems of structure, with methods of conducting meetings, with questions of visible objectives, with financing problems and with the matter of leadership. And when we have achieved a result that seems quite workable and efficient, the uneasy question may force itself into consciousness: "What would Christ think of all this?"

If there is widespread naturalism in our Catholic Action groups, and by that token a failure to embrace the full ascetical life of the Church, the implications with regard to Catholic lay leaders are not hard to see. *Nemo dat quod non habet* (No one can give what he does not possess). No Catholic lay leader will be above the Rotarian level who is not earnestly trying to live the supernatural life. And he will be simply not in his element in Catholic Action. He will be trying to give others what he has not himself. Whatever be his talents for thinking, for speaking, for directing, he will be adding no congruous advantage to the Kingdom of Christ. He might be likened to a fine automobile pressed into service as an airplane!

It is evident that the answer to these difficulties reposes in a more vigorous spiritual life on the part of lay leaders and members of Catholic Action cells. Somehow, they must awaken to a vital understanding (Newman might call it a "real assent") of the demands of Christian asceticism. And then they must more earnestly employ the great means of that asceticism, prayer, renunciation and reception of the Sacraments, in order to enter as becomes apostles the higher life of the Church. When such a time comes, we may expect to see a richer blossoming of sanctity, a fuller harvest of conversions, in the Church in America.

HE SPENT HIS LIFE AIDING BLIND READERS

MARY FABYAN WINDEATT

ON April 26 of this year, Joseph M. Stadelman, S.J., went to his heavenly reward. A good many people knew Father Stadelman, and mourned his passing, but it is the Catholic blind of this country who are going to miss him most. Since 1900 he had been working for these afflicted ones of God, encouraging them by personal contact as well as in another way that few people know. For Father Stadelman was the founder of the Xavier Free Publication Society for the Blind, an organization in New York City which is busy, year in and year out, publishing Catholic books and a magazine in Braille and mailing these without charge to blind persons throughout the United States.

Father Stadelman, born in Guebwiller, Alsace, on June 4, 1858, came to America as a boy, and entered the Society of Jesus at West Park, N. Y., when he was nineteen years old. He was ordained on August 25, 1889, when he was thirty-one, subsequently taking up teaching and parish duties at the College and Church of St. Francis Xavier in New York City. One of Father Stadelman's chief interests at this period was the spiritual care of the deaf-mutes in the metropolitan area. He learned the sign language (an unusual feat at the time for a priest), and had great success with preaching in this medium to his hard-of-hearing flock. It was difficult work, one requiring great patience, to minister to the deaf-mutes, but Father Stadelman's heart was in his labors. Unknown, except to immediate associates, he worked quietly away at his chosen task and had the happiness of knowing he was being of help to those who otherwise might have drifted from the Church.

While Father Stadelman was working for the deaf, he made the acquaintance of Margaret Coffey, a devout blind woman. Miss Coffey asked him what was being done for the Catholic blind in the matter of providing spiritual and doctrinal reading matter for them. Were there available any Catholic prayer books? Biography of saints? Devotional volumes of any sort? There were not, but presently Father Stadelman knew there would be a change. Private and governmental agencies had done quite a bit to provide reading matter in Braille for the American blind, but none of this was of a Catholic nature. Up until this time, the sightless had been quite neglected in the matter of spiritual reading in Braille. The whole field was new, but especially so to the Church.

The spirit of Louis Braille, the French Catholic of the last century who originated the raised printing system which bears his name, must have rejoiced when Father Stadelman entered the field of the blind apostolate. With very little help from any-

one, save from Margaret Coffey, who gave him her life savings, the Jesuit priest organized the Xavier Free Publication Society for the Blind. The arduous task of plating and printing the best Catholic works was welcomed by Father Stadelman, and little by little his library increased in size. By 1918, he and his helpers had published 700 books in the now obsolete New York Point Tactile Print. The subject matter included works on art, science, biography, history, poetry, fiction and travel, as well as ascetical, ethical, doctrinal and controversial works. The zealous Jesuit priest also inaugurated a magazine in New York Point, *The Catholic Transcript for the Blind*, a monthly religious and literary publication sent free of charge to any blind person applying for it. Herein were carried notices of each book the Society published, and from this small magazine the readers could make their choice of reading matter. A request sent to Father Stadelman, and the desired book was on its journey, postage free both ways; by reason of a special Federal provision.

Between the years of 1911 and 1918, the Society published, in cooperation with the Xavier Braille Society for the Blind, in Chicago, some 600 titles, as well as another magazine, *The Catholic Review*. The work was being blessed and maintained in a truly remarkable way. Letters came into the New York headquarters to tell just what happiness and encouragement Father Stadelman's labors were bringing to countless sightless souls. The Jesuit priest thanked God for the opportunity to become associated with a unique and wonderful work, little realizing that nearly everything he had accomplished was about to be rendered useless.

It was in 1918 that the authorities in charge of blind institutions throughout the country decided to drop the New York Point Tactile Print and to adopt, for universal use, the system known as Braille, Grade One and a Half. As a result, the hundreds of volumes the Society had published were now almost useless, among these being a set of seventeen monumental volumes of the Douai version of the Bible. The work of years was set at naught almost overnight, but the undaunted Father Stadelman was not a man to be downhearted for long. As soon as possible, he reorganized his work, learned the technicalities of the new system, installed the requisite machinery for printing, and with only the smallest of resources contained to guide the little Society on its precarious way. Since 1918, it has added hundreds of new titles to its library, and today there are more than 5,000 books available to blind readers.

Among the chief helpers of Father Stadelman during the last twenty years have been the members of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae. Scores of these Catholic women have undertaken to study Braille and to learn how to transcribe in their homes the necessary books. During the last two years they have put into Braille 121 titles, totaling over 300 volumes. The Alumnae of the Kenwood Academy of the Madames of the Sacred Heart, at Albany, N. Y., have also helped the Society by preparing 110 volumes

in Braille. Several books on Gregorian music and transcribed musical selections have been prepared by the Society, to enable blind Catholic musicians to qualify as church organists. The average cost for one volume of a Braille book is one hundred dollars. Thus, an average novel, which runs into three bulky volumes when transcribed, entails an expenditure of at least three hundred dollars. The great need at present is for funds to enable the Xavier Free Publication Society for the Blind to issue new titles for its readers. From humble sources have come the means which enabled Father Stadelman to carry on his great work for over forty years.

Besides putting the best Catholic books and pamphlets into Braille, the Society has engaged in another work, for a beginning has been made toward providing "talking books" for its members. A large percentage of the sightless find it impossible to read embossed books. The solution to this problem is the making of books on long-playing phonograph records. To that end there is now perfected the Talking Book Machine, built by the American Foundation for the Blind. Experiments have shown that a book of 60,000 words can be recorded on 12 double-face disc records, and can be manufactured at a cost which makes the recording of Talking Books a practical venture. To date, the Society has recorded the Four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. The Kenwood Alumnae defrayed the cost of recording the Gospel of Saint John, as well as the Acts of the Apostles. The Gospels of Saint Matthew, Saint Mark and Saint Luke were recorded through the generosity of the Brooklyn Circle of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae. These records have been placed in all the lending libraries for the blind throughout the country and may be had for loan by any blind person free of charge.

A visitor to the Society, whose headquarters are at 136 West 97th Street, in New York City, will find a plain four-story brownstone house, similar to thousands of others that line the side streets of Manhattan. In the basement is the printing machinery that has turned out the thousands of Brailled volumes. Upstairs are the general offices, circulating library and bindery, from which go out each month several hundred volumes to sightless clients of the library all over the country.

Father Stadelman went to his reward last April, the last six years of his life being spent as an invalid from a severe foot infection. Unable to be on hand at the Society's headquarters as in the past, the eighty-two-year-old priest, nevertheless, continued to direct its work from Saint Ignatius Rectory, at 84th Street and Park Avenue. In his life time, the wonderful things he accomplished for the Catholic blind in this country received little or no publicity. The depression in the early '30's sorely affected the Society he pioneered, and it was necessary to make the monthly magazine a quarterly.

Father Stadelman is dead, but the great work he began in 1900 is still with us, a precious legacy to every Catholic interested in the extension of the Church.

ORIGINAL SIN: THAT IS OUR TROUBLE

THOMAS A. FOX, C.S.P.

IF man came from the jungle, as some still insist, it was because he thought his way out. He hewed his way out with an ax, which it took headwork to contrive. The evolutionist should be more explicit than to say simply that man came from the jungle. To come out of a jungle is to come into the clear; but with the exception of desert, there could have been no clearing on the face of the earth for man to come into. Though the fellow can be brutishly stupid at times, he was hardly monkey enough to give up his watered shade for the burning sands of the desert. The only clearing which could tempt aboriginal man from his densely pillared roof had to be one that he made himself.

Considerably before he abandoned his sylvan simplicity, he must have peeled off his simian coat and chopped down a number of trees. Which means he had implements; which means he was using his head; which means he was an inordinately smart monkey; which means he was man, even back in the jungle. Pascal called man a thinking reed, suggesting in a flash all the pensive infirmity of our kind. We need not entirely deprive the evolutionist of his simian predilections. We might go part way with him and call man the monkey with an implement; intelligence lodged in flesh; the animal which uses its head.

Now, though headwork brought man into the clear, it has also entailed endless confusion. He is miserable to a great extent, and precisely because he *can* think. His history is one long nightmare of high-gear aspiration and low-gear fulfilment. He can think faster and farther than his feeble efforts will carry him. While he slogs along through the mud, he can contemplate the stars. His political history is one revolution after another. Repeatedly he strikes out in grandiose fashion to change his lot, and always in a forward direction; yet his net progress is snail-paced.

Of one who heaps his plate at table with more than he can eat we say that his eyes are too big for his stomach. Man's imagination is too big for his power of achievement. He can imagine a paradise, as his poets and philosophers have done over and over again in enchanting detail; and yet the earth of which he is master and forever tinkering with resembles more often a hell. He is forever at odds with his better judgment. When you contrast the stolid order of the brute kingdom with the hurly-burly of human affairs, you cannot but wonder what it is that makes man his own worst enemy; what lies at the bottom of his inhumanity to man?

The trouble seems to be with his desires. For one thing, he tends to exceed in satisfying them. The

brute has simple appetites for food, drink, rest and mating, and satisfies them simply, with monotonous instinct. Excess is rare with the brutes, since they lack imagination to whet their impulses and lure them on to "sad satiety." But even the most instinctive appetites of man's animal nature are steeped in the colors of his mind. He invests their satisfaction with ceremonial, as if to show the brutes that though he shares their nature, he is quite an exalted being just the same. But this very fact of his being the knowing impresario of his animal feelings carries him often to a degree of indulgence which would be too gross even for the brute.

Besides, man can want, at the same time and with equal fervor, things which are irreconcilable; which is the chief source of that frustration and turmoil which characterize his life. A middle-aged man, for instance, wants abundant good food and a slender waistline; and at his stage of life the two do not usually go together. Another fellow wants success and a life of ease; but since honorable success usually means hard work, he is put on the spot with Solomon, and may possibly wind up (as Solomon did not) by cutting the baby in two and getting neither the success nor the ease. Another wants glowing health and the heady joys of dissipation, which happen to be poles apart. It is a wonder there is not more outright civil war in human society, considering how prevalent it is in the individual soul. Desire is pitted against desire, and inward peace goes glimmering.

High tragedy comes when the conflict of human desires is enacted on the larger stage of society. For example, mankind desires peace. War being the all-out frenzy it has become, impoverishing life in every aspect, peace must appeal to any but a fool. Nations dearly want it. But they also want to enjoy unfair advantages over each other; they crave the spoils of injustice; and these desires do not jibe. Abiding peace is unthinkable without abiding justice. Hitler may think his people the cream of the crop, and in the matter of launching an army they doubtless are; but the French, English, Spaniards, Poles, Czechs and non-Germanic tribes generally do not share Hitler's roseate regard for them and consequently will never in a thousand years acquiesce in German overlordship of the earth. They will have only one name for whatever advantages Hitler's Legions may wring from them—injustice. And they will lie in wait and ceaselessly plot to avenge that injustice as long as there is breath in them. Pacification by force of arms? Decidedly; for awhile; but not peace. Will he dictate a just settlement? No conqueror ever has; which is why the lovely face of the earth is pockmarked by endless wars.

Individuals want to be on good terms with their neighbors; but they also want to have an edge on them: two things which do not match. The result is social unrest in a country. Pointed discriminations in the social set-up did not end with feudal times. The prince flourished his finery before the gaping eyes of the peasant, and the lord of the manor luxuriated in his immunities and privileges;

but so does the modern middle-class gentleman like to strut his riding togs or golf clubs before the proletariat; and mordant envy is rampant in the land.

There are even sharper inequalities in the economic sphere. The possible wealth of a country has its limits; even if cultivated to the full, it would hardly be enough to go around, if everyone got an adequate share. But little attempt is made at even distribution. Greed and vanity must be served. Each man wants a little more than the next one, a bigger or better house, a finer car, a larger balance at the bank. This mad scramble to get as much as or more than the other fellow is hardly conducive to normal blood pressure in the body politic. Men felt sullen toward the millionaire, not because he worshiped the golden calf, but because they themselves did not have one to worship. And so boils the pepper pot of human desire.

Catholics understand the ultimate reason why man is in a perpetual stew of varied emotions, or constantly at odds with his better judgment. It is unfashionable, however, to mention the reason in public. But when huddled together like this, over the columns of a Catholic publication, it may be safe to whisper the term: *original sin*.

Once upon a time man dislocated his desires, and there has been the devil to pay ever since. He is forever wanting to eat his cake and have it too. On the baseball diamond only one player is allowed in the batter's box at a time; but on the playing field of a man's affective energies, a dozen different desires may be in there swinging lustily at once. Satan takes him to a mountain, displays the broad valley of the fleshpots, and then shoves a contract in front of him. With poised pen, man turns to Satan and coyly asks: "Can I have all this and Heaven too?" As if he really believed that Satan was giving something for nothing. The devil's suavity must be sorely tried. He must feel like answering: "You that sired commercialism! You should expect something for nothing!"

The modern ocean liner carries a contrivance called a gyroscope to keep it from pitching in heavy seas. Whatever else man lost by original sin, he certainly lost his gyroscope; his life tosses perilously in a sea of irreconcilable wishes. We should have to give him up as lost, were it not for one mighty fact: Redemption. Through the merits of Christ he can restore the grace of God to his soul; can regain the lost hegemony over his desires, organizing them in favor of the spirit and his high eternal destiny, not to mention his inward calm and the common good; can swing fulfillment into line with aspiration and really hitch his wagon to the stars.

"What went you out to the desert to see?" asked Christ in reference to Saint John the Baptist, "A reed shaken by the wind?" The question answered itself, for it was plain that John was no reed, though he did a lot of thinking out there in his desert retreat. He was too filled with the strength of God to be a reed. In the measure that we garner the grace of God for ourselves, we can lop off the uncomplimentary half of Pascal's description of us.

NOW WE BEGIN

LAST month, throughout the United States were held commemorations of the Labor Encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XI. Ten years ago, the whole Catholic world celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the Labor Encyclical of Leo XIII. This honor was unusual, but merited, for the Encyclical was a magnificent affirmation, in the face of a world gone mad in pursuit of materialistic ends, of the dignity of man as a creature of God, and of the sacredness of the rights which an all-wise Creator had bestowed upon him.

Solid in its teaching, and bold yet persuasive in its presentation of fundamental principles, the Encyclical laid bare the inhumanity of the social and economic philosophy which in many parts of the world had reduced the wage-earner to a position differing little from that of a chattel slave. If today, the world is beginning to take a juster view of the wage-earner's rights, and of the necessity of protecting them, by law when necessary, in the interest of the common good, that change is due, it may be asserted with reason, to the influence of the Leonine Encyclical.

The hope that a similar celebration, with its center in Rome, might be held this year, to link the Encyclical of Leo with the no less important Encyclical of Pius XI, was frustrated by the unfortunate turn of events in Europe. Yet it is interesting, and in a sense, touching, to observe that an effort was made to commemorate the two Encyclicals in France, Spain, Italy, England and Germany. More happily placed than our Catholic brethren in those ravaged districts, we in America were free to celebrate the occasion as seemed best. While what was done was not, perhaps, of a nature to arouse very great public interest, we can congratulate ourselves that at least some success was secured in bringing the Encyclicals to the notice of men and women to whom they were practically unknown.

But we assuredly cannot congratulate ourselves that all has been done that needs to be done. The Encyclicals are something more than mere statements of principles. They are calls to action, and to immediate and vigorous action. We need to clear our minds of the delusion that once these principles are made known, reform will come about automatically. The Encyclicals are maps, not vehicles which carry us into the countries outlined upon them. They tell us what must be done, and on what principles action must be based. But they do not prescribe the manner in which needed reforms are to be accomplished, since this will vary in different countries. The precise methods and their practical application are to be ascertained by us, and upon us rests the duty of introducing into our communities the reforms that may be necessary.

The course adopted by the Catholic Labor Schools, established in many American cities, will lead, we are persuaded, to practical action. Under the guidance of our Bishops, and with the interested support of all Catholics, they will give us the lead which we need.

EDITOR

NATIONAL EMERGENCY

EXERCISING his legitimate authority, President Roosevelt proclaimed, on May 27, "that an unlimited national emergency confronts this country." By his oath of office, the President is bound in conscience, under God, to guard over the rights of this nation and to seek in every way its welfare. If, therefore, President Roosevelt is convinced that the United States is gravely menaced by an aggressor nation, his is the duty and his the power to proclaim the existence of this unlimited national emergency. In turn, it is the duty of every citizen to accept the fact of such an emergency.

THE PRESIDENT WANTS

THE President's broadcast on May 27 made no substantial change in our situation but made much clearer his policies and his reasons for them.

These reasons fall under three principal heads. "The war is approaching the Western Hemisphere itself. It is coming very close to home." Control of these vital, outlying points by Hitler would "jeopardize the immediate safety of portions of North and South America."

We cannot trust Hitler, no matter how pacific are his utterances.

Finally, the situation on the seas is critical and desperate. Upon control of the seas depend both victory and defeat of the Axis Powers. The British at the present moment are unable to replace tremendous losses caused by Nazi attacks.

All of these circumstances create, in the President's mind, an "unlimited emergency." To meet that emergency he indicates a general line of policy, "to repel attack," wherever upon the face of the globe it may occur. Such a policy involves "stern choices," it means that our country "has a very definite relationship to the continued safety of homes in Nova Scotia or Trinidad or Brazil. The choices, however, are still but hinted at; they are not stated specifically and in so many words.

He does not as yet inform us that American troops will be shipped to fight abroad upon foreign soil; but lets us know that "we shall actively resist wherever necessary, and with all

NATIONAL UNITY

LOYALTY to the nation and cooperation with the policy established by President Roosevelt is obligatory for every American citizen. As specified by the President, there must be loyal cooperation in defense production, in adjustments between workmen and employers, in civilian defense against foreign subversive agencies. There can be permitted no disunity within the nation, no rupture of our democratic processes, no lethargy in our preparedness program. While opinions are free to vary on reasons and methods, every citizen must loyally respond to the ultimate call to action.

WARNS ON EMERGENCY

our resources, every attempt by Hitler to extend his Nazi domination to the Western Hemisphere, or to threaten it."

The President does not ask specifically for convoys; but he does make plain that besides the existing patrols "all additional measures necessary to deliver the goods" to Britain will be taken. He subsequently observed, to reporters, that convoys are unnecessary for this.

He mentions no new or unusual measures to be taken with either capital or labor in order to ensure defense morale in the field of production. But he warns capital that this is "no time" for it "to make or to be allowed to retain, excess profits"; and "impartial recommendations of our Government conciliation and mediation services will be followed by both capital and labor."

The proclamation on this occasion of an "unlimited emergency" still awaits, for its implementing, individual proclamations of emergency in the various fields—exchange, transportation, shipping, etc.—where the President already possesses extraordinary powers. Where these powers are lacking, it still awaits the action of Congress.

The address and the accompanying proclamation, therefore, find their major significance as expressions of the President's undiverted purpose. They are also lucid indications of the lines along which Congress and the American people must speedily act if we wish to build up adequate national defense while keeping our country out of war.

LET FARMS RAISE FOOD

NOBODY who wishes to keep his reputation for sanity will venture to say that the farm problem is solved. But it may be conjectured, without danger of complete lunacy, that hard times imposed by conditions abroad may bring us a little closer toward putting our agricultural house in order at home.

Cows, hens and pigs are supposed to be the most familiar figures on every farm. Yet types of farming have grown up in this country where the cow, the hen and the pig have no more place than the giraffe or the giant panda. If farms are run no longer in order to supply food, there is no room there for animals whose chief purpose in existence is to be eaten or to produce something to be eaten.

Suddenly we are alert to the idea that raising food may not be such a bad plan for farmers after all. The cow, the hen, the pig, the vegetable garden, may be more than mere specialties for a limited number of dairy or truck farmers: they may be able to carry a large part of the load of farm production that the big staple crops have been monopolizing.

Significant it is that this proposal comes from Government or near-Government sources. Speaking May 27, in Washington, D. C., before the National Nutrition Congress, A. A. Berle, Assistant Secretary of State, believed that "the farmers of Canada, of the United States and of many of the South American republics would not be worried over 'overseas markets' if every family on the American Continent had the food which it ought to have to improve the health of the Americans in the future."

Secretary of Agriculture Wickard informs us that we could profitably consume "twice as much green vegetables and fruits as we do now, 70 per cent more tomatoes and citrus fruits, 35 per cent more eggs, 15 per cent more butter, and 20 per cent more milk." On the other hand, there is no way in sight by which this country could increase its consumption of "the three great crops produced heavily for export—wheat, cotton and tobacco—" sufficient to take care of the surpluses.

One of the best uses, says Mr. Wickard, that could be made of some of our cotton and wheat land, would be to devote some of it "to the products we need if we are to build up the health and strength and stamina of our people."

This means, says Vice-President Wallace, the restoration to their ancient dignity of "the cow, the hen and the pig," who are experts in extracting vitamins. The production of "protective" foods means "more hard work from the farmer than the simple energy foods."

Farm experts have peaceably pursued for nearly a decade the dream of obtaining higher prices through restricting production and encouraging fewer, rather than more, farmers to remain or settle upon the land.

At least two heavy jolts have awakened the experts out of these traditional slumbers. One of

these is the collapse of the foreign markets, which leave upon our hands our non-edible surplus. The other is a startling revelation as to the physical condition of the young men called up for the draft. Out of about 1,000,000 examined, 400,000 were discovered to be unfit for military service. "Probably one-third of these," remarked General Hershey, "are suffering from disabilities directly or indirectly connected with malnutrition."

Elaborate plans were proposed by the National Nutrition Congress for educating the public as to proper nutrition values. In corresponding fashion, says Secretary Wickard, "we must shift our agriculture more and more toward producing those foods which are rich in vitamins, minerals and the right kind of proteins."

"The food-producing homestead," write Ligutti and Rawe in their *Rural Roads to Security*, "has economic, social, cultural, and ethical significance. That is why every housing program should be a 'productive-home' program, the program of a modern home with acreage. Without this, there can be no real 'slum clearance.'"

The problem of distribution is to be met by practical cooperative work between city people and farmers. The city people get better diets; farmers better market for their products. If this means that the Government encourages home production and decentralized food production, on a wide scale, it may indicate the dawn of a sound rural economy not unlike that encouraged by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference in recent years. From the horrors of war, there is at least this comfort to be drawn, that they are educating people in this country as they have done abroad to a better appreciation of good old Mother Earth.

THE VOCATION OF NURSING

CHIEF business of nurses in earlier times was to take care of those who were actually sick. With the growth of preventative health work, the scope and the social influence of the nurse's profession correspondingly increased. New and perhaps wider opportunities are offered for talented women. But with the spread of opportunity comes also an increase of danger, heavier weight of moral responsibility. For nurses' organizations today are a tempting hunting ground for proponents of antimoral nostrums. The Birth Control Federation is only too anxious to have its nefarious propaganda made an "integral part" of the public-health program and, by the same token, to involve the organized nursing profession in the same cause.

Words, therefore, addressed on May 25 by Archbishop Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, to the Catholic Nurses' League of Pittsburgh are much to the point. "Perhaps no way of living offers itself with so many opportunities for sanctification as the vocation of nursing," said the Delegate. We need not only capable nurses, but holy nurses to withstand certain inhuman pressures today. No better armor is at hand than that of personal holiness.

OUR TRIUNE GOD

YEARS ago, we stood at a mother's knee to begin a training that gave great joy to the Heart of Jesus. We were learning to say our prayers, and she, with the art that is given to all true Christian mothers, was slowly and carefully pronouncing the words, "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." Addressed to the Most Blessed Trinity, that was our first prayer and, please God, it will be our last.

As little babes, we were brought to the font, and there baptized "in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The years go on, and we find ourselves for the first time in the tribunal of penance, and we hear the words of Christ's minister, "I absolve thee from thy sins, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Shortly thereafter, perhaps the very next morning, we approached the altar to receive Our Lord in Holy Communion, a sacred ceremony preceded by, and accompanied with, the Sign of the Cross. By that time we had learned the usage of the Church in blessing us in the Name of the Most Holy Trinity, in beginning the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and all her prayers, in the Name of the Triune God, and in administering the Sacraments with continual recurrence to this adorable Mystery of our One God in Three Divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

To the Catholic, then, all holy things are associated from the beginning with the Blessed Trinity. Therefore he prays that, as his failing senses veil this world, the priest of God will be at his side to bid him go forth into that other world in the Name of the Father, Who created him, of the Son, Who redeemed him, of the Holy Spirit, Whose office is to sanctify. As we begin, so we end, in the blessed hope that in the courts of Heaven we shall glorify and love, the Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

In the Gospel for Trinity Sunday (Saint Matthew, xxviii, 18-20) Our Divine Lord clearly announces the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. When we say "mystery," we mean a truth, Divinely revealed, which we cannot fully comprehend. We can learn very much about the Blessed Trinity, but since our minds are finite, we cannot attain to a complete knowledge of it. Yet there is nothing that is contrary to reason in this sacred mystery, and we accept it, not because we fully understand it, but because Jesus Christ, Incarnate Truth, has told us that it is true. On the authority of men whose character and learning entitle them to teach us, we daily accept as true, mysteries in the natural order, of which we actually know little. Jesus Christ, affirming the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity, has a character and an authority that are beyond all question. Whatever then, comes to us from Him, our Divine Teacher, we accept without hesitation as infallibly true.

Our first simple prayer can become a mere form, or we can make it a consoling and efficacious prayer. On the Feast of the Most Blessed Trinity, let us begin to make it a true prayer.

CORRESPONDENCE

APPLIED CHRISTIANITY

EDITOR: I was delighted to see the article by John J. O'Connor (AMERICA, May 17). It gave me enough courage to send you this letter which might help some of your readers to become more interested in practical applied Christianity.

We all agree that Christianity was founded by Christ, that it spread over Europe and the New World, that wherever it went schools, hospitals, the care of the needy, the arts and the sciences always followed. Note the contrast in India, Africa and Asia.

Now how do we account for the acceptance and great accomplishments of Christianity? I believe that the answer is because the prospective converts became convinced that there actually were people who really loved their enemies, did good to those that hated them and prayed for those who persecuted and calumniated them.

When we see what hate has done to Europe and the New World, does it not seem reasonable for Europe and the New World to return to the principles of the Eternal Galilean?

Winthrop, Mass. JOSEPH P. HIGGINBOTHAM

POETIC PRICES

EDITOR: From time to time articles are published deploring the fact that Catholic literature does not circulate as widely as it should. Maybe this is true, but if it is, the fault does not lie with the editors and publishers of Catholic periodicals.

As a matter of fact, the Catholic writer on religious subjects has a wider and a far better paid market than his Protestant colleague. You can quickly prove this by examining the periodicals in the religious section of any large public library. In one field, that of the Catholic poetry, I have recently come across some very definite and accurate information as to how much better the Catholic poet fares.

Of the Catholic magazines, five pay good rates; two, low. Of the non-Catholic, one pays good rates, one fair, one low. The comparison is still better where actual prices are named. The non-Catholic magazines quote as follows: \$1 to \$5 a poem, one; \$1 a poem, two; 25 cents a line, five; 15 cents a line, one. One well known Protestant weekly is quoted as not paying for verse published.

The Catholic periodicals pay \$2 to \$5 a poem, one; \$5 a poem, one; \$1 a poem, one; and, believe it or not, one monthly pays \$5 for the first four lines and 50 cents a line for the rest.

Another conclusion could be based on the examination of all the religious papers in the public library: the Catholic papers are larger, better printed and better illustrated. Altogether my study

makes me question whether the grumblers give enough credit to the editors and publishers, or even to the readers. Without a good many readers these magazines could hardly continue to exist.

Palo Alto, Calif.

HARRY E. MAGEE

EASTERN RITES

EDITOR: Puzzling for several reasons is the following sentence in Henry Watts' article, *The Church's Growth in Multi-Millions* (AMERICA, May 24): "The extent of their progress (that of the Oriental Catholics) is shown by the fact that only a few weeks ago the first Slovenian monastery in the United States was inaugurated in the archiepiscopal province of Chicago."

It is rather difficult to see how the formation of a Slovenian monastery indicates in any way the progress of the Eastern Rites in this country, since the Slovenians are members of the Latin Rite.

The locale of the supposed new monastery provides the second mystery. It is placed vaguely within the confines of the archiepiscopal province of Chicago and therefore at some indefinite place in one of these dioceses: Chicago, Rockford, Peoria, Springfield in Illinois, Belleville. Perhaps the writer was referring to recent events at St. Procopius' Abbey, Lisle, Ill. (and a glance at the place list in the *Catholic Directory*, a volume which is supposed to have furnished the material for the article, would have given the definite information that Lisle is not only in the "archiepiscopal province" but also in the archdiocese of Chicago).

The zealous Abbot of Lisle, the Rt. Rev. Procopius Neuzil, O.S.B., has long been desirous of providing a point of contact between the large numbers of Russian Orthodox residing in the United States and the Catholic Church. His plans envisage the eventual foundation of a Benedictine monastery of the Byzantine-Slav Rite. Those plans moved one step nearer fulfilment when, during the past month, two of his monks, who had been ordained priests in the Roman Rite, transferred with the approval of the Holy See to the Russian form of the Byzantine Rite. Previously, two other monks of the monastery, American by birth but Ruthenian by extraction, had been raised to the priesthood by the Most Reverend Basil Takach, Greek-Ruthenian Bishop of Pittsburgh. These four priests form the nucleus of the future monastery which, however, has not yet been inaugurated; nor can it be, according to Benedictine practice, until their numbers have been further augmented.

There is, nevertheless, a strictly Byzantine Rite monastery in Chicago, that of the Ukrainian Basilian Fathers. Although the number of monks residing continuously in the monastery (three priests and one brother) is rather small, still this house is

the headquarters for about a dozen other priests of the Order of St. Basil the Great who are working as missionaries or pastors in various parts of the country.

Chicago, Ill.

DESMOND A. SCHMAL, S.J.

PURELY COINCIDENTAL

EDITOR: You have discussed this mess for which our war-minded minority is readying us in many cogent articles and editorials in *AMERICA*, but none of them can compare with that written by T. W. O. Seamen in the issue of May 3.

This article is a magnificent piece of satire on the whole interventionist movement. The muddled thinking, contradictions, loosely defined catchwords, quasi-technical verbiage and generally puerile approach—by all these marks may the we're-next-on-Hitler's-list school of thought be identified, and the authors of this current article have quite cleverly woven each of them into their amusing text.

Those readers who took the article at its face value, however, can be reassured by your note to the effect that any resemblance between the opinions expressed by T. W. O. Seamen and the official policy of the Navy Department is purely coincidental.

Albany, N. Y.

CHARLES P. O'CONNELL

SHORT CUT TO WAR

EDITOR: The article by T. W. O. Seamen (*AMERICA*, May 3) is illogical, un-American, undemocratic and apparently seeks to stir up a spirit of hysteria, if not hatred, that would lead our country into a heinous and futile war.

Dollar diplomacy coupled with a new slogan, "Defeat Hitler," is no improvement over our present muddled diplomacy and misleading slogans.

According to our Constitution the Congress advised by the people, and not a war-minded Administration advised by its own appointees, shall have the power to make the momentous decision of peace or war.

The writer of the article would substitute steps short of war with a short cut to war. He would not listen to the people, whom he terms busybodies, noise makers and untrained messiahs, but would give ear only to appointed boards and staffs, whom he describes as the brains of the Nation.

New York, N. Y.

D. J. D.

ENGLISH VIEW

EDITOR: We in England, especially English Catholics, value very much indeed the interest of our fellows in America. We feel quite sincerely that we are up against an ugly and pagan force which we must fight—as much for our Faith as for our country. Cardinal Hinsley's leadership is quite a genuine expression of our convictions. We know our faults, but with humility we do feel that we have a cause that lifts us above them.

The great mass of the people here—no doubt as in America—have little interest in what might be called the arguable issues of international politics.

All they see is an aggressor who is using his power to trample on the liberties of small, free nations. They are a casual and sentimental people, the British, who hate war largely because it jolts them out of their comfortable rut; but not even that dislike is going to alter their determination to see this bit of corrective work through.

Their indifference to everything else, even their own suffering, is quite magnificent. I can speak thus because I have enough Irish blood in me to make me impersonal.

London, Eng.

D. N.

THE PRESIDENT

EDITOR: The United States is a perfect society with a legitimately elected Government, at the head of which stands a President. It so happens that at present the people, acting through their representatives in a legitimate way, have given the President unusual powers to meet an unique situation. So it is that authority in the present crisis resides mainly in the President.

Consequently, when the issue is confused and as long as there is no positive evidence that he is in the wrong, we cannot go wrong by following the decisions of him who has his power from God.

Have we not something like a debt we owe to Caesar which demands at least some respect for the decisions of the State whose duty it is to defend the rights and temporal welfare of its citizens?

Kansas.

A. M.

OUR DEFECTS

EDITOR: It seems we Catholics have fallen down on the job. It is reported Hollywood will make no more films showing priests in favorable light because of a torrent of disapproving letters following on their production of the *Fighting 69th* and the *Boys Town* shows.

If we had, as we should have, expressed our appreciation, possibly it would have counterbalanced this. Of course, it does seem, in this democratic country, it should not be considered extraordinary for those outside to give a true picture of our Catholic life, but it would be polite to acknowledge their friendly appreciation of it. Aside from us Catholics, I know there are a goodly number of good people outside the Church who were glad to see all these films.

Another thing we have fallen down on, I believe, is in the article about Lady Emily. I'm much afraid the gentleman who wrote it must know Lady Emily from second hand, and that she herself would have his own opinion about the circumstances he mentions.

There are too many real things to protest about, without protesting against imaginary ones.

Louisville, Ky.

ANASTASIA M. LAWLER

(The views expressed under "Correspondence" are the views of the writers. Though the Editor publishes them, he may or may not agree with them; just as the readers may or may not agree with the Editor. The Editor believes that letters should be limited to 300 words. He likes short, pithy letters, and merely tolerates lengthy epistles.)

LITERATURE AND ARTS

CATHOLIC STAGE PLANS

EMMET LAVERY

BEHIND the simple announcement that Fordham University will be host to the third national session of the Catholic Theatre Conference on June 15-16 is a success story which baffles even those of us who are most intimately acquainted with it.

As a piece of machinery, the Conference is lamentably handicapped. It has never been able to find enough money to operate the well-staffed service bureau which is needed to correlate completely the common experience of member groups.

As a practical idea in modern theatre, the Conference is an incredible and an unexpected success. It has brought together in an enduring community of interest the thing we have been talking about in the commercial theatre for years: a national theatre with regional emphasis, located in no one center, but taking in the whole width and length of American life.

The National Catholic Theatre is no longer a dream. It is a fact—now—today—by the common will of two score college, parish and community theatres who bring rare competence to their work, and by the common support of hundreds of other groups who are trying, with increasing success, to follow the pace set by the more experienced groups.

After all, the basic problem was much simpler than we had ever anticipated. If we knew our theatre, if we knew our own particular tradition in the theatre, and if we had the patience to be perfectionists, we were bound to win through. Here, for your information, are just a few who did win through:

The *Loyola Community Theatre of Chicago*: host to the first session of the Conference at the invitation of our present President and golden jubilarian, Father Dinneen, S.J. It is a model parish theatre in every detail; introduced the spring play cycles, at which neighboring theatres present the best plays in the Catholic tradition at a common center *within a week or ten days*; and seminar play discussion, not only at play cycles but as regular features of production schedule.

The *Graduate Department of Drama, Catholic University, Washington*: under the direction of Father Hartke, O.P., and Walter Kerr, has attracted national attention with musical biographies of George Cohan and Joe Cook; with a recent tour of *God's Stage*, an exciting chronicle of Divinity in drama; with a play writing of Walter Kerr and Leo Brady; with its excellent Summer School of Theatre; with the use of guest stars like Robert Speaight.

The *Blackfriars Guild, New York*: under direction of Father Nagle, O.P., and Father Carey, O.P., has established a new Experimental Theatre devoted to production of new plays at 316 West 57 Street, where new headquarters of Catholic Theatre Conference are also located. The national organization of Blackfriars is steadily advancing and now has a new unit in Boston.

The *Catholic Theatre Guild of Pittsburgh*: new group formed shortly after our first Conference session in Chicago, with Father Victor Kennedy as Moderator. It has a fine record for its devotion to new plays; it enjoys unusual community and critical approval in Pittsburgh, where it has had the warm support of Bishop Boyle; its current production is the world premiere of Morna Stuart's *Traitor's Gate*.

Fordham College, New York: Playshop now in its twentieth year. From its play writing seminar in 1939 came the new student play on Edmund Campion published by Longmans, Green in *Theatre for Tomorrow*. The acting and direction are extra-curricular, in charge of Mr. W. K. Trivett, S.J., and Albert McCleery, formerly of *Stage*; this year major emphasis was the production of *Oedipus Tyrannus* in Greek under the direction of the Classics Department, with a new score by Virgil Thomson.

Add to these the dramatic productions at Boston College under the direction of John Bonn, S.J., one of the finest directors in the country; the reorganized *Catholic Theatre Guild* of Buffalo, which now has Monsignor Britt, the Chancellor, for chaplain; the new *Catholic Theatre* of Detroit, which is forging ahead rapidly under the direction of Paul Lilly; the *Catholic Theatre Workshop* of Los Angeles started by Charles Costello, now under the direction of Joseph Rice; the veteran *Catholic Theatre Guild* of Louisville which still enjoys the able direction of Fred J. Karem; the *Blackfriars Guild* of Rochester which has enjoyed unusual success with guest stars; the dramatic productions of Eva McClain Sankey at Webster College, St. Louis; the joint productions of St. Benedict's and Mt. St. Scholastica at Atchison, Kansas; the productions of Loyola University, Baltimore, under Father Richard Grady, S.J. and John Lawton; the outdoor productions at Rosary College under the direction of Sister Mary Peter, O.P.; the flair for experimentation by Sister Camillus at Marywood, Scranton; and, encouraging to report, the rapid development of strong groups in various seminaries of the country, notably St. Mary-of-the-Lake, Mundelein, which a few seasons ago presented the world premiere of *Brother Petroc's Return*.

This quick listing gives no space to a wide variety of excellent college productions in the East and West, particularly in women's colleges, which are

usually much more adventurous in theatre experimentation than the men's groups are. This listing also gives no hint of the variety of dramatic form which is being used in these productions. But it may serve to demonstrate one exciting fact: no other theatre group in the country has so many mature groups currently producing *according to a common tradition in the theatre*.

If the day ever comes when twenty of our more experienced groups can, by proper planning a semester ahead, present the nation-wide premiere of a new play *within the same week or month*, we shall truly have erected a national theatre, without subsidy and without endowment. After all, Federal Theatre raised the curtain on Sinclair Lewis' *It Can't Happen Here* in seventeen cities the same night. We should be able to do as well, within the same week or same month, with the next play as important as *Murder in the Cathedral*. For if we are ever to translate thought into action, we must learn to do more of the same plays the same season. Fortunately, that day is not too far distant.

At this point, it should be noted that we have made no effort to professionalize the college, the parish and the community theatre. In the theatre as in life, we Catholics look to the basic unities. We see a new identity for the vast tributary theatre beyond Broadway, we see it as an integral part of the American scene, we see it exchanging from time to time the best of what it has with the best of what Broadway may have, but we never see this regional work in American theatre usurping the place of the professional theatre. We realize that theatre at its best is a single entity which enjoys the active collaboration of the professional and the non-professional craftsman. To that entity we as Catholics bring a philosophy of life which enriches and re-invigorates all fields of theatre, both professional and non-professional.

We want our colleges, our parish and our community theatres to be every bit as good as Broadway—and they can be, when the direction is good. But, first and last, we want them to be a community experience which deepens and broadens the pattern of American life. We want them always to remain amateur: amateur in the best sense of the word.

And the object of all this? To develop a few more playwrights, a few more actors, a few more designers? No, the object first and last is to develop human beings on both sides of the footlights.

We like to consider it a good omen that an amazing number of non-Catholics choose to work with us in our Catholic theatre groups. It is readily understandable, of course. The theatre is by its very nature a believing process and in the theatre we Catholics are extraordinarily well met with our friends from other communions. We have everything to give and nothing to lose.

In the Conference, of course, we have made our mistakes. We have had more than our share of growing pains. But we have learned, to our delight, that the idea is much more life-giving than the machinery. (Perhaps it is because we had so little machinery to get out of order, that the idea flour-

ished with such vigor and vitality!) We have learned, too, that the idea is far more important than the people who work at it.

Please, then, consider this your personal invitation to the Conference meeting at Fordham. We promise you a working session for sincere craftsmen: no high-pressure oratory, no banquets, but plenty of panel discussions on light and design, direction, play writing. And as a special treat we offer a critics-producers-playwrights round-table, at which practical problems of writing and production will be considered, and at which the audience will be encouraged to participate.

Today, when community morale is a matter of such immediate concern to each of us, the theatre—and especially Catholic theatre—is increasingly important. For the theatre is much more personal than radio or films. It can shape character and it can hold it, for theatre involves a very real personal participation by the audience.

It is not at all improbable that our Catholic theatres the country over may have a large part to play in implementing the work of the National Catholic Community Service. And not just in the matter of putting on plays for soldiers, but in finding some way to let these soldiers have the fun of participating in the back-stage work of a vigorous modern Catholic theatre.

Well, we have come a long way since some of us began to write letters to AMERICA four years ago! Come to Fordham in June and we promise you an exciting preview of the next four.

OUR BOOK-CHART GROWS

THE best way to receive a compliment is to say a simple "thank you." And that we say to all those who have written in to state that they like the feature we introduced recently, our survey of *What Catholics Are Reading*. We are glad it has been of service, and, as we hoped, it is growing in scope. Hence, beginning with this issue, it will appear once a month on the inside back cover, where more space will be available to include the growing number of reporting bookstores.

May we call attention again to the fact that the numbers in the *totals* column is by no means the number of books sold? In the current report, for example, the 22 opposite *Grace of Guadalupe* means that in 22 of the reporting cities and stores this book is among the ten that are selling best, or, in other words, that it has been voted 22 times as being among the first ten.

The advantages of such a chart as this lie in the fact that it represents not merely a list of recommended books. It is a list of those that *are* actually being read, and it has been our hope all along that, according to the adage (and if you will pardon any unintended implications), "monkey see, monkey do," others will be led to read the books they know their confreres are reading. So, we offer the expanded service as our small contribution to the cause of Catholic reading.

H. C. G.

BOOKS

LENGTHENING SHADOW OF THE LAST WAR PRESIDENT

WOODROW WILSON. By David Loth. J. B. Lippincott Co. \$3

THE tragic development of events in Europe has made an attempt to restore the prestige of Woodrow Wilson inevitable. It is easy for his followers to say that the present struggle would have been avoided if his policies had been adopted, and to urge a return to those policies as our only hope of salvation. To convince the people of this, it is necessary to explain his failure in a way favorable to him and to show that his program was sound. Mr. Loth has undertaken this formidable task in his journalistic account of Wilson's life.

That Woodrow Wilson failed in Paris is conceded by all, but the reasons for his doing so are still hotly disputed. His place in history will be determined by the interpretation that finally prevails. Some see in him a great moral leader, far in advance of his time, with a program that failed only because of the faults of other men. Others think of him as a man of average ability and character who was deceived by cleverer men when drawn beyond his depth, and who made concessions in principle through weakness. The Germans never weary of denouncing him as "an arrogant and dishonest schoolmaster."

Mr. Loth chooses the first of these opinions and devotes his book to establishing his thesis. The bulk of it, naturally, is given to the war and its aftermath. The author admits only one error in Wilson's tactics and none in his program. The error was the appeal for a Democratic Congress in the election of 1918. The fact that anyone who had to manage such great affairs would make honest as well as dishonest enemies is ignored and, from first to last, everyone who disagreed with the President is accused of personal and unworthy motives. Those who were once his intimate friends and who fell from favor when they ventured to disagree are treated with great severity, and Colonel House is consistently disparaged.

The Fourteen Points are inseparably connected with Wilson's name and it is unfortunate that no mention is made of their origins. They were similar in many ways to the Peace proposals of Pope Benedict, which are not even mentioned, and were ultimately to share the same fate. It is precisely because they are his chief claim to fame that his abandonment of them is so difficult for Wilson's friends to explain. Mr. Loth has prepared a popular brief for the defense and has ignored almost all the points the opposing counsel would make. A shining example is his failure to mention the Irish problem which was an acid test of his hero's sincerity.

FLORENCE D. COHALAN

CHIEF MAGISTRATE JUDGES HIS OWN CASE

PILLAR TO POST. By Henry H. Curran. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$3

THIS is the touch-and-go autobiography of the present Chief Magistrate of the City of New York. It is highly recommended as a document of an upright person, and as a masterpiece of clean, American style. Each chapter has the charm and interest of an independent story; the almost 400 pages shine with a clarity of mind, a

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charity of heart. In telling his story, the author knows what to omit. This wisdom he has learned from long, hard experience of active and intimate participation in the government of a city which represents the whole human race as no other city has done in the history of the world. This wisdom he has learned, too, from his side-occupation of writing,—as a newspaper reporter, as author of political short stories in *Scribner's* which were edited under the title "Van Tassel and Big Bill," and of political essays published in the *Saturday Evening Post* and edited under the title "John Citizen's Job."

Henry Hastings Curran is of old Protestant stock. He joined in a torchlight parade for Cleveland in 1884, when he was seven years old. He worked his way through Yale, as his father did before him. Trained in poverty and simplicity, he entered New York City life, where he has held many important positions.

He stands flatly opposed to the centralization of power in the Federal Government as against the once Sovereign States. He moans over the spendthrifts in Washington who keep sending the boondoggling billions down the drain, and warns that it will soon rock us all to our heels. He is for eggs on the old peoples' breakfast table as against roosters on the officials' letterheads. He is for flexibility in the fingertips of government as against brittle retention of power at the top. "They are delicate affairs, men, women and children. Typewritten papers cannot tell their story." He is for "the High Law of Innocence." Some people want him for our next President.

The author may be complacent; he may be, by his own admission, testy, stubborn, uncompromising; but he has a record of integrity that few can rival. His reasons for our entering the last World War seem extremely boyish, but he served bravely in the field. He was lucky the day he married Frances Ford Hardy. Her influence is on all he has achieved. So, too, is the sweet influence of the classics—Seymour in Greek, Adams in Medieval History, Beers in Shakespeare. There is only one sly mention of Christ in the book, and for that a man of Henry Curran's stature should be ashamed. Yet is the Word of God in all he thinks, and *Spiritus ubi vult spirat* is his own deliberately chosen theme-song of his life.

THOMAS BUTLER FEENEY

DIVERSITY AND UNITY MAKE OUR GREATNESS

THE AMERICAN TRADITION. By Louis B. Wright and H. T. Swedenberg, Jr. F. S. Crofts and Co. \$2
FEW thinking men will deny that our country has in this year of grace entered a critical phase in its brief history. Recent legislation has brought us to a parting of the ways. No longer shall we stand secure and self-sufficient, lords of the West; we have taken on ourselves the task of rebuilding a broken and tottering world. For better or for worse, we have entered on a career of world responsibility.

The compilers of this anthology have attempted a timely service. In this generous selection from the writings which form our literary heritage, they would suggest to troubled Americans "something of the qualities that have given to the United States strength and the element of greatness." Washington and Jefferson, Webster and Lincoln proclaim anew the doctrines that have helped to establish our tradition of liberty. "National characteristics past and present" are illustrated by essay, description, factual article, narrative and short story. Even the catalog of authors represented is confirmation of the statement that "the genius of this country has been its independence and its capacity to assimilate other cultures and at the same time develop characteristics distinctly American."

In his excellent introduction, "Faith in the Land,"

Professor Wright subjects to keen analysis the doubt in the future of the country that has marked the last two decades. Rightly he deplores the debunking and muck-raking which deepened the cynical reaction to the perfervid patriotism of the first World War. But "grievous as are our national faults, there are creditable facts that should be remembered." The true glories of our past and what we still preserve of that heritage, the editors would present to the reader to kindle in him "a steadfast purpose to defend our civilization against the forces of disintegration and chaos."

In recalling to us our heritage and bidding us treasure it, the editors have performed a signal service and are to be congratulated on a job well done. But their volume, intended "for English composition and introduction to literature or types courses," cries out for a complement. For if, as a prominent American has declared, "the capital of the world of tomorrow will be either Berlin or Washington," then the men and women of tomorrow must ask themselves whether or not we are prepared for world responsibility. Can we, as a nation, adapt for the healing and restoration of a broken world the pattern of life we have worked out for ourselves, without undergoing a profound spiritual rejuvenation? This is a question that *The American Tradition* does not even raise; only the positive side of the American scene is presented. But this is a question that must be answered.

J. F. MURPHY

BEHIND THE RISING SUN. By James R. Young. Doubleday, Doran and Co. \$3

THOSE who are admirers of Bob Ripley, Walter Winchell and Neal O'Hara will probably be delighted with Mr. Young's *Behind the Rising Sun*, for they will find there many odd and amusing bits of superficial information with which to astonish and regale their friends. On the other hand, those who are more concerned with ideas than with items of food and means of transportation, will be disappointed that after living thirteen years in Japan, Mr. Young contributes so little analysis and interpretation of the really vital factors in the life of the Japanese people.

He does show that "Japan is plagued with militant, arrogant, and world-defying military cliques . . . and Bund-type organizations which thrive on the use of intimidation under the guise of patriotic motives," that "the defiant army fanatics, taking their cue from German-inspired sources, seek to sever all contact with Christian religions" by taking over properties of foreign religious, medical and educational organizations; that tourists are persistently annoyed, abused and "held in durance vile" under suspicion of espionage; that the army can ignore or invalidate any agreements made with other nations by the Foreign Office.

The last hundred pages are the most interesting ones in the book. Here Mr. Young abandons his jerky, columnist style and gives a good account of a visit to Chungking, and of his own imprisonment after his return to Tokio because he reported that there were Japanese soldiers prisoners of war in China, that some non-military objectives in China had been bombed by the Japanese, and that Japan is now suffering from shortage of certain materials that are necessary for everyday life and for the prosecution of the war.

MARY L. DUNN

THE NEW "COMMON SENSE." By W. F. Russell. The Macmillan Co. \$1.50

COMMON sense is at times rare, but never new. The ideas contained in this book on democracy are happily old fashioned. The adjective "new," inserted in the title distinguishes the present book from Tom Paine's *Common Sense*, and recalls a once famous document highly praised by George Washington.

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same way the splendid definition of democracy to be found within the Declaration of Independence, and he would insist with the author that democratic principles hark back to religious principles and to the teaching of Christ. But a Catholic would go farther; he would stress Christ's Divine authority as Teacher. His historical outlook being universal, he would display no partiality toward Nordic and English achievements. Where Locke receives credit for the philosophy behind our Constitution, the Catholic scholar would justly trace its origin back to Scholasticism and to Bellarmine and Suarez, from whom Locke finally derived his ideas. While the author's philosophy admits religious principles, his plan of educating for democracy contains no explicit provision for teaching religion. A democracy turned pagan will fall.

GEORGE T. EBERLE

CORNER DRUGGIST. By Robert B. Nixon, Jr. Prentice-Hall, Inc. \$2.50

AFTER the long line of biographies and autobiographies of the country doctor, the country editor and the country lawyer, a veracious history of the old-fashioned corner druggist was needed to fill the book-shelf. The hero of this biography was a hard-headed, tender-hearted and somewhat cranky individual, fond of working on patented articles, none of which came to much, and even more fond of writing letters to the newspapers on how to reform the world. He never made money on his various drugstores, but seems to have mended the deficit in the pleasure he took in feeling that the next of his shops would be the long-sought bonanza.

One piece of advice which he gave his junior confreres deserves reproduction. The more babies that are born, he would say, the more business druggists will get, and for this reason, writes his biographer, he would never handle emmenagogues or contraceptives. "Those who do are losing profits and ethical standing," and they are in danger of somebody making a death-bed confession and involving them. The book gains nothing by the inclusion of three or four pointless, off-color narratives.

JOHN WILTBYE

THE GANG'S ALL HERE. By Harvey Smith. Princeton University Press. \$2.50

IN 2141 A.D. an aspirant Ph.D. in pedagogics, will unearth a rare first edition of *The Gang's All Here* in the micro-film library of Humanus University. He will proceed to discourse eruditely and conclude apodictically that a university by the name of Nostalgia existed about the early part of the twentieth century and that the so-called "graduates" of this place were an odd lot, but withal lovable. They were all unique, all true individuals, even though few, if any, were scholars.

Harvey Smith will be the brilliant cause for this error, which will be an error in the name of the university alone. He has presented a collection of pen sketches of the silver jubilee alumni class of Nostalgia that is so accurate, so thoroughly enjoyable, with the exception of a few spots that border on the vulgar, that the book is liable to be misunderstood and suffer the same fate as the masterpiece of Swift.

E. J. FARREN

FARAWAY ISLAND. By Elizabeth Jordan. D. Appleton-Century Company. \$2

EVERY red-blooded adult who as a child thrilled over the adventurous pages of *Robinson Crusoe* will find in this racy, interest-packed tale of modern Crusoes some delightful hours of escape from war and politics. Cast away on a tropical island are thirteen Americans, married and single, strongly diverse types, though mostly young and mostly upper-crust. Provided, in best 1940 shipwreck style, with a bit more than the requisites for living, they are, however, inconveniently equipped with the nerves and imagination that are the scourge of a high-tension age.

Exercising the craftsmanship that has always marked her abundant output as a novelist, Miss Jordan handles well the potentialities of her material, nicely guided by a sure sense of the dramatic.

NATHANIEL W. HICKS

MUSIC

ACCORDING to the French baritone, Yves Tinayre, who is an authority on early sacred and secular music, the word "motet" changed its meaning three times. In medieval times it described "the art of playing with the words" ("little word" from the French *mot*) in the thirteenth century, therefore, composers associated three different texts to the three different musical parts of a motet. During the sixteenth century its meaning changed and "motet" designated any sacred choral work (without accompaniment), whereas, from the seventeenth century, the term had become entirely generalized and was applied to any sacred vocal composition for one or more voices with instrumental accompaniment.

Today, little is known of the composers who used the motet in its seventeenth-century form. Through twenty years of research in libraries throughout Europe, Yves Tinayre has culled information that is not available in America from any other source, and has put some of his knowledge at the disposal of this writer.

Interest in the motet in Italy in the seventeenth-century was very great. During the sixteenth-century, the tremendous output of polyphonic music, starting with Okeghem and Josquin des Prés and ending with the two Gabrieli brothers in Venice after having included the works of Palestrina, had set a sort of officialdom in the Catholic world of music.

Great changes were brought to musical composition in the early seventeenth century by the innovations of Caccini, Banchieri and Ludovico Viadana. This last main invention was the practice of the thorough-bass, an abbreviated form of writing for the organ. It was a reaction against the polyphonic system of the sixteenth century and brought about the harmonic system in use in our day.

As soon as the musical form of the motets began to change, one of the greatest innovations was the solo motet. This was written by composers who knew the tradition of vocal polyphony but were eager to change a formula that had been prevalent for some time. It is interesting to note that such practice brought forth the solo singer in the church for the first time since the medieval deacons who sang the *sol* in the Organa.

Claudio Monteverdi was the only master musician of the time to gain a solid posthumous reputation. If Monteverdi was favored by posterity, a great many other masters enjoyed a wide-spread and well merited reputation during this period. They devoted a great deal of their production to Church music as in almost every instance they were servants of the Church in the capacity of organist or choir master.

Every well known church kept, besides the organist, a certain number of instrumentalists to accompany the singers. One of the greatest European centers of Church music was San Marco in Venice. It was in this famous cathedral that Monteverdi, who was master of music, formed an orchestra of thirty-five musicians.

The solo motets produced during the seventeenth century were of two kinds. First, the motet for solo voice with organ-bass accompaniment and second, the solo motet accompanied with organ and instrument in orchestral form. This orchestral accompaniment was usually for strings, but in some instances, trumpets and trombones were specified on the scores of these composers.

During this period, the solo motet reached a very high musical standard, and kept at the same time a profound religious significance. Later, during a second period of development, the motet became more musical than mystical and was frequently accompanied by strings and organ.

(To be continued with recordings of motets by Yves Tinayre.)

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THEATRE

OUR BLIND SPOTS. Newspaper critics have already awarded prizes to those stage men and women, who, in their opinion, have done the best acting on the New York stage this season. No doubt their choice has been wise. The names of the happy prize-winners have not lingered in my memory, but the best acting of the season has, and I've already shown, I hope, full appreciation of it.

What interests me now is the good acting that has had neither prizes nor much praise. In my choice of the best of this it must be remembered that I am thinking solely of acting—whereas the prize-givers, wisely, no doubt, and certainly following the usual procedure, have invariably selected their winners among players in the best plays.

I have not done this. When I write of acting I write of acting, and when I write of plays I write of the merit or lack of merit of these plays. Sometimes, but more rarely than I like to admit, we have that brain-and-heart-satisfying combination of good plays and good acting. Much more frequently, and as frequently ignored, we have good acting in bad plays. Sometimes it is only a bit—like the bit Diana Barrymore gave us in her first play this season, the name of which I have forgotten. But I have not forgotten her work, nor the proof it gave us that a new Barrymore has entered the theatrical field and is definitely to be reckoned with.

Some of the most brilliant acting of this season, from my viewpoint, is the acting Gertrude Lawrence is giving us in *Lady in the Dark*. It won no prizes, probably because it is done in a revue; but it is nevertheless the most amazing example of versatility the stage has recently offered us.

Miss Lawrence is by turn a neurasthenic patient in a doctor's office, a poised and highly executive professional woman at an editor's desk, a school girl, a public singer, a dancer, and half a dozen other characters. The job keeps her on the stage during almost the entire progress of the two-hour-and-a-half revue, but there is never an instant when her vitality or her art flags. She deserves a special prize for a unique record.

An actor who has not been shown half enough appreciation by the reviewers is Donald Cook in *Claudia*. We are all so carried away by the work of Dorothy McGuire and Miss Frances Starr that most of us have dismissed Mr. Cook's acting with a brief tribute. He was merely, it seems, among those present. No one was more enthusiastic than I over the effulgence of Miss McGuire's acting and the subtlety and charm of Miss Starr's; but I am ashamed of the fact that they made me overlook the background Mr. Cook gave both these actresses—a background which vastly increased their effectiveness and added to the success of the play.

Another actor who did not get enough praise to satisfy me is Victor Moore, who let out his art several notches in *Louisiana Purchase* and had the result taken for granted because he is always good. Also there was Jean Adair's work in *Arsenic and Old Lace*, so delicately perfect that it was obscured for many spectators by the blaze of Josephine Hull's performance.

Helen Craig's acting in *Johnny Belinda* was warmly praised after the opening, but it has been taken for granted ever since, and the prizegivers were blind to its unusual poignancy. Also, very few things we saw last winter were finer than Canada Lee's performance of *Native Son*, but we accepted that as no more than our due, and dismissed it with a few enthusiastic words.

All of which merely means, my children, that while we've had a brilliant theatrical season and much superb acting, we have not fully appreciated everything good that was given to us in such abundance.

ELIZABETH JORDAN

FILMS

LOVE CRAZY. The cynical belief that marriage is the cure for love is lightly contested in this comedy which presents a novel hero willing to go, literally, to his wit's end to stay married. When his misguided wife contemplates a separation, the husband pretends to be insane, which is apparently one of the Hollywood impediments to divorce. Jack Conway's direction is lively rather than subtle, and he has succumbed on but few occasions to the temptation of suggestiveness in the dialog. A couple about to celebrate their fourth anniversary are parted by a misunderstanding involving another woman, and the husband's ruse of madness succeeds too well. Upon his escape from a sanatorium, he is pursued as a dangerous maniac and is forced to disguise himself as his elderly sister to bring about a reconciliation. The details of the plot are an index to the character of the fun, but there is a mixture of suavity and broad humor in the film rather than outright farce. Myrna Loy and William Powell are excellent in the featured roles, with the latter getting an extra opportunity for female impersonation which shows both virtuosity and a touch of vulgarity. *Adults* should find this good, if eccentric, entertainment. (MGM)

BLOOD AND SAND. This film version of Blasco Ibanez's novel suffers from defects which are, in a sense, proper to the screen, such as a melodramatically obvious story, slowness of pace and preoccupation with color for its own sake, and yet it insists on adding a far more annoying fault. The studio has undoubtedly gone to great pains to be accurate about everything in the Spanish background except the most important thing, religion, and the film's references to Catholic worship can be construed only as the product of offensive condescension or of stupidity. The plot itself is in sharp contrast with the brilliant color used, being a grim and rather unpleasant account of a matador who reaches the peak of fame only to be led astray by a woman. Rouben Mamoulian has not relieved the sordidness of the action but he has interrupted it momentarily to allow the color camera to contribute the best elements of the production. Tyrone Power, Linda Darnell, Rita Hayworth and Nazimova are featured in a film which would be harshly entertaining if it did not alienate the Catholic part of its audience. (Twentieth Century-Fox)

SHE KNEW ALL THE ANSWERS. The suggestion of brashness in this comedy is practically limited to the title, and the film has a fresh appeal supported by a well-balanced production. The incidental business gives a weak plot an illusion of novelty, and Richard Wallace's sense of balance camouflages the dull patches with whimsical humor. A chorus girl with ambitions to marry a playboy goes to work for his stuffy guardian in order to further her plans. Her natural mistakes on the job have a surprisingly good effect on the brokerage business, and she proves so valuable that the guardian claims her for himself. Joan Bennett, Franchot Tone, John Hubbard and Eve Arden, assisted by bright dialog, make this an entertaining adult trifle. (Columbia)

SCATTERGOOD PULLS THE STRINGS. Clarence Budington Kelland's resourceful character radiates helpfulness from his hardware emporium in a small town to make this a pleasant little film. Scattergood unites a homeless boy with his father and protects the local inventor from the wrath of the townspeople whose olfactory sense has been outraged by the tentative steps of experimental science. Christy Cabanne keeps this episode in the series within its limits. Guy Kibbee and Bobs Watson dominate this family picture. (RKO)

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EVENTS

DIPS From Life: A thirteen-year-old New Jersey boy pointing a gun at a woman, demanding her purse. A man unexpectedly appearing. The boy firing four shots at the man, snarling, when finally overcome: "So what? You can't do anything to me; I'm too young." The boy's father remarking: "I can't do anything about my son. I'm afraid of him myself. I don't care what you do with him as long as you keep him away from me." . . . A family feud in the Kentucky mountains. A fifty-five-year-old widow declaring, after her husband had been slain in the intra-family gun-play, that his death ended her life-long hope to one day see the "other side of Kentucky down Knoxville (Tenn.) way." The widow telling the sheriff: "It's the worstest thing happened since our step-daughter, Oney, moved away down to Harriman (fifty miles distant in Tennessee). I hain't seen Oney in ten years, but my poor husband seen her a couple of years ago and he came back and said: 'Sarie, it's the purtiest country I ever see, and come Fall I'll fetch you down there.' I figured to get out of Clear Fork Valley for the first time in my life. Guess the Good Lord meant for me to stay here in the hills and end this shootin'. Well, it's ended, 'cause now there ain't no one but me to shoot." . . . In New York, a two-year-old boy, leaning too far out of a fourth-floor window, falling to the street below, landing in a laundryman's pushcart, not a bit the worse after his dive. . . . A thief stealing a new bus of the Syracuse Transit Corporation from the company garage, running the bus on all-night routes, pocketing all the fares. . . .

The Brooklyn trial of various members of Murder, Inc., an organization which had assassins for hire. Evidence at the trial throwing light on the mentality and technique of the killers. . . . One paid killer, sipping a bottle of soda water after a murder and inquiring of his boss: "So, what's it all about: who was this guy and why did we kill him?" . . . A killer remarking in court: "Boss met me one night, and told me he had a job for me to do. I knew he wanted me to kill somebody. I didn't know who was to be killed. The boss said to me: 'When this fellow shows up do a good job and everything will be all right. He will be in a car. Shoot him in the car.'" . . . Another killer, turned informer, describing the eleven murders in which he participated. Asked: "Have you a conscience?" the killer replying: "I don't know what you mean." Queried further: "When you were killing others for money did you believe there was a God?" the assassin answering: "Yes, I did, but you must remember I had my manner of living." . . . In Georgia, a fast passenger train jumping the tracks, running half a mile, then swinging into a curve and climbing safely back on the rails. . . . Dr. Robert M. Hutchins, president of the University of Chicago, declaring: "Our university graduates have far more information and far less understanding than in the colonial period." . . . Peoria, Ill., dropping the title of dog catcher, changing it to "Canine Control Officer." . . . Lowell, Mass., specifying that five new patrol cars on order must be equipped with extra-heavy seat springs, as the officers who will use the cars weigh respectively 215, 210, 208, 208 and 201. . . .

Jack Dempsey kneeling in the chapel of a Catholic convent school. Mrs. Dempsey near him. . . . Young voices singing: "O Lord, I Am Not Worthy." . . . Jack watching a little girl in white approaching the altar rail to receive her first Holy Communion. The little girl is Joan Dempsey, six years old. . . . Tears welling in the eyes of the former world's champion. . . . Jack, a Mormon, Mrs. Dempsey, a Baptist, are raising Joan a Catholic. . . . Says Jack: "I want her to get a good Catholic education."

THE PARADER